



Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

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the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



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Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

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Introduction

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

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Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



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Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

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Introduction

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the



emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between

Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent



foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



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Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



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Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Introduction

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

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Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



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foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,

students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent



foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the



emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

The Arab Spring revolutions led to a change in regimes s in many Arab countries, and it was assumed that the new systems of government in these countries would provide stability in the region, but the exact opposite happened. In the same trends and policies, armed and extremist militias also appeared in these countries, such as ISIS and the Houthis, which prompted these countries to seek the help of neighboring and pro-Western countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Emirates. This is what prompted Saudi Arabia to create an Arab coalition in its leadership an intervened in Yemen aimed to protect it from the Houthis armed group allegedly sponsored by Iran. Especially after the legitimate, president of Yemen Abd Rabbo Mansour requested the Arab summit conference in Sharm al-Sheikh where he requested Arab Leaders to protect his regime. Perhaps the main goal behind the Saudi intervention in Yemen is not to protect the legitimacy of President Abd Rabbo Mansour as it is claimed, but rather it is fighting its opponents in its neighboring countries. Because this poses a threat to the stability of its regime, and the other reason is facing the Iranian threat that surrounds it on its borders (Muhammad, 2015).

The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

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Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

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The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of



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Introduction

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In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

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Saudi Arabia Intervention in Yemen's conflict

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The 2011 revolution in Yemen led to Yemen's entry into the arena of regional conflict, especially after the Houthi group took control of most of the Yemeni cities in the north and south and attacked the headquarters of President Abd Rabbo Mansour. Therefore, the conflict in Yemen became a proxy war, and after the fall of Sanaa at the hands of the Houthis, Iran admitted that this was a new victory against Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. In addition to the Houthi rebellion and their refusal to reach any settlement to resolve

the conflicts, also prompted Saudi Arabia to create a huge Arab coalition under its leadership to strike the Houthis and prevent the expansion of the Iranian threat that is called “Decisive Storm”. Saudi Arabia also justifies that its interference in Yemen is a response to Abd Rabbu Mansour’s appeal to protect legitimacy because it saw the Houthi’s control of Sanaa and its possession of heavy weapons and the siege of the presidential palace as disrupting political life and an infringement of legitimacy. While Iran sees the emergence of the Houthis as a natural result of the oppression that was being carried out by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, as it considers that this is the right time for it to demand its right (Selvik, 2015). Moreover, the Western countries Ali Abdullah Saleh as legitimate ruler of Yamen (Jan and Majid, 2017).

From here began the formation of what is known as "Decisive Storm", which was its first military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015. It is considered an unprecedented process in the history of Saudi foreign policy, as it has always relied on indirect intervention through financial support as happened previously in the revolution in 1962 in Yemen. However, what made it interfere directly this time is the extent of the danger of the Yemeni position near its borders and its danger to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf in general and to it. In the second process political process, which it was called "Restoring Hope" that aimed to create a secure and stable future in Yemen, which has often failed due to the ongoing Houthi rebellion (Al-Shorouk Newspaper, 2015)

In the case of Yemen, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa and turned against the internationally recognized legitimate authority, and detained the legitimate president, Mansour Al-Hadi, in the presidential palace, until he managed to flee to the south in Aden and take it as his temporary capital. Due to the imminent and increased danger of the Houthis against him, Abed Rabbo Mansour sent a letter to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In accordance with United Nations and Article (2) of the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Mutual Defense Treaty, asking them to intervene and take all necessary measures, including military intervention. To protect Yemeni legitimacy and the Yemeni people from the threat of the Houthi aggression supported by Iran, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries responded except of Oman, which has an independent

foreign policy. It considered that what the Houthi militias did was an assault and aggression against the legitimate authority, and based on that, Operation Decisive Storm began.

Legitimacy of Operation Decisive Storm

The condition of using military force for legitimate individual and collective self-defense in accordance with Article (51) requires that the state declare that it is a victim of an unlawful military attack against it, which violated its independence and territorial sovereignty. When there is an external aggression from a third country that violated the sovereignty of its land and the countries intervening to protect them from aggression. It also requires that the government that requested the intervention be internationally recognized and that it would be of an elected person representing the will of the state and the citizens. That government unifies its control over its entire territory, which raised some questions and controversy over the military. Intervention of what Mansour Al-Hadi requested from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to protect legitimacy as the Houthis have taken control of some regions and strategic sites in Yemen, the most important of which is the capital, Sana'a and the Mansour government has lost its effective control over some of its regions (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). Perhaps the fears of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are that the Houthis will carry out an armed attack on Saudi territory again. As evidenced by the presence and armed bases of the Houthis on the Saudi border in Saada and their possession of high-caliber weapons, long-range missiles and ammunition. Besides, the experience the Houthis gained in the war against the Saleh regime and Saudi Arabia compelled them for the self-defense against any possible attack against it. The Saudi intervention came at the invitation of the legitimate government in Yemen, in which it requested assistance from the Gulf States and to take all necessary measures, including the military intervention to protect it from the Houthi coup against it. United Nations Charter stipulates that it is not permissible to use military force within the borders of another country because this contradicts its territorial integrity and political independence.

The Operation Decisive Storm won broad Arab support, as the Arab League expressed its support for the operations against the Houthis in Yemen. Egypt expressed its support and offered air and navy but hesitated to provide a ground force. Sudan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon and many other countries expressed support for the decision of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Besides, Arab countries to participate in the operations that aimed to preserve the unity of Yemen and support the legitimacy in it until Yemen regain its stability and unity (Ismail 2015). Turkey also supported Operation Decisive Storm led by Saudi Arabia on the ground that the intervention was requested by Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur and also Houthis violated the signed agreements and UN Security Council resolutions as well as they did not respond to calls for dialogue and showed intentions to move towards controlling Yemen. As for international support, the United States of America provided logistical and intelligence support, not military. The United Kingdom has also provided political support for the Operation Decisive Storm, as well as France, which has expressed its stand on the side of its allies and partners to restore Yemeni stability.

Iran is the main supporter of Houthis. It provides different kind of support to the Houthis, including military aid, weapons, media coverage, technical support and many other things. Iran considers the operations of Decisive Storm as an aggression and penetration of the principles of international law. Ayatollah Khomeini explained that this intervention is considered a massacre that Saudi Arabia must bear its responsibility before international courts. The Iraqi President also made it clear that Operation Decisive Storm is unacceptable, and that the Yemeni people will solve the problem in Yemen. The Syrian government also expressed its strong opposition to the Saudi military intervention in Yemen, as it considers it as a clear aggression. Russia also condemned the Saudi intervention, which is the biggest ally of Iran. It called on all parties and allies to cease-fire.

Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention in Yemen

Interference in the internal affairs of a country is strictly prohibited in international law. The jurists of international law still could not develop a unified concept of humanitarian intervention and the humanitarian intervention has not an agreed unified definition. Therefore, the jurists called the military intervention for humanitarian considerations several terms with shares of those who supported it, and some who opposed it based on the rules of international law itself (Al-Rashidi 2003). Humanitarian law stipulated in articles 64 and 70 that intervention in order to provide humanitarian aid be not considered interference in an

armed conflict. Therefore, powerful countries in the past exploited this humanitarian aid to make military intervention justified and legitimate, which violates the sovereignty and independence of weak states (Camus, 2017). Countries have used many justifications to make military intervention legitimate, such as protecting minorities, defending human rights, and protecting their citizens abroad. It threatens the independence and sovereignty of the weak state against interference and pressure, as this charter calls for the necessity of collective security, not on the part of one country (Hassani).

Conclusion

Today Yemen is facing a bad situation due to war, aggressions, foreign intervention and proxy war of regional rivals inside the country. The country is facing one of the worst humanitarian crisis which fully deteriorated the state and society. The common people are affected very much and facing unboreable consequences. Although the Saudi intervention in Yemen had gained international legitimacy, regional and international support, and the support of the legitimate government in Yemen but it has increased more the problem of Yemen. Despite of six years war still peace and stability is a dream.

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Saudi Intervention in Yemen's Conflict: An Analysis

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia intervened in the Yemen conflict aimed to keep stability in its immediate neighborhood, protect the regime president Abd Rabbo Mansour and defuse the influence of Iran its main rivalry in the region. These goals of Saudi Arabia foreign policy were not possible to achieve especially after the Houthis seized control of Sana. Nevertheless, Yemen now is standing on the brink of civil war, and the intervention by Saudi Arabia cannot do anything to avoid it. In spite of Riyadh has prevented the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels from capturing the whole country but the Houthis still control large parts of the country. The Saudi "Operation Decisive Storm" campaign was an absolute disaster for Yemen and the air strikes against the Houthis changed the situation of civil war in the country from bad to horrific. Yemen is now being viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as hundreds of thousands of people dying and millions facing the specter of disease and starvation. Saudi Arabia's justification for this attack is based on the claim that it just offering help according to a neighbor in need of assistance based on a specific request from the ruling authority, but in reality, it is seeking for its interests and foreign policy goals in the region.

Key words: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, war, intervention, Decisive Storm, Houthi.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are enjoying good relations since long due to many common features of both societies such as religion, language, culture, history, socio-economic similarities and neighborhood. The political system of Yemen before the 1962 revolution was a monarchy, which was the Wahhabi regime. Saudi Arabia was working to extend and support this Wahhabi regime militarily and financially against the September 14, 1962 revolution that aimed to overthrow King Muhammad Al-Badr, but it failed due to the intervention of the Egyptian army (Yassin, 2015). Since long Saudi Arabia is interfering politically, financially and militarily in the internal affairs of Yemen (Al-Fass 2016). However, the conflict in Yemen in 2011 has its own character, as it has a strong influence in destabilizing the political structure of Yemen and the Arab region and is characterized by the

emergence of new regional actors. Such conflict has weakened Saudi Arabia's control and diminished its influence on the political scene in Yemen because of the transformation of some other countries like Qatar and Iran. As well as the emergence of the armed Houthi group in the Yemeni scene near its borders, which mainly lead to interference and use the air force, which was called “Decisive Storm” under its leadership (Al-Munjami 2015). Perhaps the most important reason that prompted Saudi Arabia to intervene in the affairs of Yemen was Iran's desire to create a security belt and blockade the Saudi border from the South in Yemen, as it was able to besiege it from the North in Syria and Iraq. By relying on the Houthis who are closest to Iranian fiction of Islam i.e. Shia, whereby Iran considered that the fall of Yemen under its control was an advantage that gained it another area of competition with Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony.

In 2011, Houthis stopped the work of the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative and in late 2014 and early 2015 they started uprising and took control of Sana and enabled to expel the legitimate president Abd Rabbo Mansour. Then Saudi Arabia setup an Arab alliance with most Arab countries, except Qatar, and started a decisive military intervention in Yemen to bring down the Houthis rebel and disarm them, and to prevent Iranian penetration. Saudi Arabia also succeeded in obtaining UN Resolution No. 2216 and in obtaining regional and international support. Saudi Arabia intervened at the request of Mansour Al-Hadi in order to protect the legitimate government and disarm the Houthis. On the other side, Iran justifies the presence of the Houthis, which it is a natural matter resulting from the oppression and torture that was practiced by the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen is considered the backyard region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the closeness of the borders between them, so it is natural that it is affected by the internal conditions and events that occur inside Yemen, as it is easy to threaten its security and stability. In addition, the Iranian role that penetrated into Yemen, as Iran represents the biggest threat to the security and stability of the Gulf in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Historical Background of Yemen Conflict

The revolution took place in Yemen on February 18, 2011 against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The revolution was launched by all groups of society, including university professors,



students, employees, workers, men, women, Sunnis and Shiites (Faqih). As a result, the forces of popular protests against the Saleh regime increased, and this pushed Saleh regime. The Arab Gulf states considered the condition occurred inside Yemen and the extent of the danger threatening the security and stability of the Arab Gulf regimes. Therefore, the 31st special session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states was held in Riyadh and the meeting called for several goals, the most important of which is urging the Yemeni community to give priority to the public interest. On the special interest and sitting at the dialogue table to reach a settlement, it also stressed that the GCC countries had contacted the opposition forces and the government and were able to reach moderate ideas that can get out of this crisis. With the efforts of the Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the negotiations of the ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council with the Saleh government through which the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were able to reach a settlement, which was known as the "Gulf Initiative" (General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, 2 June 2014). Saleh signed the initiative, but after he succeeded in obtaining immunity that would protect him from any legal or judicial prosecution, he and his aides after leaving power. (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2017). The Gulf initiative is being implemented through setting a timetable called the chronic mechanism and focused on two phases (Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The first, Abd Rabbo Mansour's candidacy for the presidency in February 2012 within 90 days after signing the initiative according to the conditions of the only candidate. Indeed, Abd Rabbo Mansour was chosen as president of Yemen and Muhammad Salem Bisnduh became prime minister. The second, Mansour Al-Hadi would rule for two years until elections are held. Presidential in accordance with the constitution, after which a new president and government are appointed. The National Dialogue Conference started from March 2013 until 2014, which ended the development of nearly 1,800 decisions and recommendations, the most important of which was the decision to divide Yemen into six federal regions. That led to the anger of the Houthis and their continuation in the rebellion and boycott, and the whole initiative was not implemented due to The Houthi coup against the government in September 2014 (Ruys and Ferro, 2016). The Houthis besieged the capital, Sanaa and staged sit-ins, and because of the alliance between



Saleh and Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, until they succeeded in entering Sanaa easily, besieging the presidential palace, detaining Abd Rabbo Mansour and controlling the most important Yemeni sites, and thus the mechanisms of the Gulf initiative were stopped. However, Abd Rabbo Mansour was able from escaping and fleeing to Aden in the South and making it the temporary capital of his rule, and new ministers and political figures were appointed in the government and supported by the popular demonstrations. That prompted the Houthis to try to control all parts of Yemen, including the south, where the president residing.

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