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# THE CONVERSATION

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## Yemen

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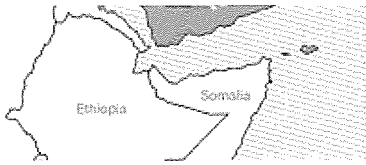
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Children sit at a makeshift camp for internally displaced people in Houthieda, Yemen.  
Reuters/Abduljabbar Zeyad



In Yemen, the civil conflict will likely drag on in a stalemate between the Houthi movement in the north and the Hadi government in the south.



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The amphibious landing of Gulf Cooperation Council forces in late 2015 allowed for the internationally recognised government to be re-established along the southern coast. Offensive operations continue in the country's southwest. Nevertheless, the northern capital of Sana remains firmly under Houthi control, with little sign that the coalition will be able to dislodge them from their traditional seat of power.

Despite the immense resources deployed in the Saudi operation "Decisive Storm" with the aim of advancing into the country's north, it has failed to produce anything more decisive than a profound and ongoing humanitarian crisis. Indeed, the bogged-down offensive has given Iran an opportunity to wage a proxy war that is sapping the kingdom's military resources.

Despite the setbacks, Saudi Arabia sees Yemen as a matter of national security and increasingly as a point of regional prestige. With its own image as a regional military power on the line, it seems unlikely that Riyadh will back down from its commitment to the quagmire any time soon.

The persistent power vacuum will also prove a rich environment for insurgents. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is bound to continue to fester due to local popular support. This has been buoyed by a recent disastrous special operations raid executed by the Trump administration against that group's leadership. The operation produced both numerous civilian deaths and multiple US casualties – a propaganda coup for the group.

In such an intractable environment, a concrete peace process looks unlikely in the near future.

 Saudi Arabia Yemen Countries to watch in 2017 

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