

WHAT KIND OF YEMEN?

ADNAN OKTAR (HARUN YAHYA)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, Adnan Oktar was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied fine arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

Harun Yahya's works, translated into 76 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 55,000 pages with 40,000 illustrations.

His pen-name is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their peoples' lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the Final Scripture) and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of irreligious ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet (pbuh), who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as God's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, Spain to Brazil, Malaysia to Italy, France to Bulgaria and Russia. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Chinese, Swahili, Hausa, Dhivehi (spoken in Maldives), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in God and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for God's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of God, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological confusion, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It

is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of God, these books will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation—and therefore, God's existence—over the last 150 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the opportunity to read only one of our books, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn God's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning God's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of God. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.

We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.

In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

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INTRODUCTION

What Yemen Reminds Us of

Until a few years ago, Yemen would remind a Turk of the folk song that is sang for the Turkish soldiers that were martyred there. Of course, it would also remind people of the coffee known in Europe as 'Turkish coffee' which, in fact, was brought to Istanbul from Yemen and whose reputation spread from there as far as Vienna. And for those who are even more familiar with Yemen, it would remind them of the Yemeni houses made of clay, mud and basalt, and the daggers Yemeni men invariably keep at their waists.

However, today Yemen only reminds people of civil war, suicide attacks, cities devastated by bombardment, hunger and poverty.

Upon reading the articles in this book, you will witness the ever-growing social and economic problems facing Yemen, and see that almost no solution or reconciliation efforts are made on the part of any of the parties. These articles serve as the images of a country that, step-by-step, seems to be heading for a catastrophe.

Each article tells us of a side of Yemen that is full of anguish and suffering. While reading these lines, you will witness how tribalism, discrimination against women, and the narcotic herb called 'khat' have devastated the country at one time or another, and you will have the opportunity to acquaint yourselves with genuine suggestions that will help alleviate this devastation.

Of course, these writings do not merely serve as a political or social analysis: Throughout the book, what happens in Yemen is analyzed based on the tenets of the Qur'an and effective and exact solutions are offered accordingly. The analysis does not adopt a tone that favors one tribe, political group or religious sect over another. On the contrary, the articles only offer solid and constructive advice that will contribute to the coexistence of the members of different sects and ideologies. By introducing a modern Islamic conception that values science, art and women, the articles discuss how such an approach will offer a remedy for the problems faced by Yemen.

One of our dearest wishes from Almighty God is the reign of peace over the entire world, and a peaceful and prosperous life for the Yemeni people as well as for all Muslims around the world as soon as possible. We do not want Yemen to remind us of suffering, conflict and dissension any more, but to remind us of a country that has achieved happiness, peace and solidarity within itself, and unity with all Muslims.

Two Countries Geographically Far Apart But Very Close in Heart and Soul: Yemen and Turkey

February 23rd 2014

Yemen has never been far from Turkey. Even when the Ottoman Empire collapsed, Yemen was close enough to express its loyalty to Istanbul. Despite their long and common history, Yemen and Turkey are today two separate countries. They have different political experiences and state structures. The problems they face and the solutions they produce are also therefore very different from one another. What is not different is the two people's feelings for one another: Love and affection. These feelings of course stem from both countries being Muslim.

Yemen occupies a privileged position in Islamic territory. Yemen is like a small laboratory; almost all the problems facing Islamic countries can be found there. So what happens in Yemen is of close concern to Turkey.

Yemen experienced its share of colonialism, it has had an experience of communism, and communist elements are still active. Arab socialists, nationalists, racists and groups with a singularly fanatical conception of Islam seem to be prevailing in the country's politics. Of course there are also foreign powers taking an interest in Yemen because of its strategic position.

Struggles between tribes and sectarianism threaten the integrity of the country. The country has natural gas and petrol, but cannot benefit from them sufficiently. On the one hand, the people desire greater freedom and democracy, while on the other they want the country to be governed better.

Yemen is like a crystal vase that is now in full view having been kept hidden away in a chest for years; a very well worked and decorated, but very fragile, vase. Since it is now in the open there is a high probability of it being struck and damaged. So how can that valuable vase be protected against potentially damaging blows without spoiling its beauty?

There is a strong demand for secession from the Southern Movement that was founded in 2007. The Southern Movement wishes to secede from the north on the grounds that "the national resources of the south have been exploited by governments that have come to power." The Spanish region of Catalonia, and Pandia in Italy, want to secede from their respective countries for the same reasons. Based on the framework of the EU and their strong democracies, Italy and Spain are keeping these demands for secession under control. In Yemen there is a factor that is far more influential than those mechanisms: Islam. If the rulers abide by the norms of the kind of moral values that God wants from Muslims, even if they come from different sects or tribes or hold different political opinions, such demands will disappear of their own accord.

"God commands you to return to their owners the things you hold on trust and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what God exhorts you to do! God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Surat an-Nisa', 58)

Another problem threatening Yemen is conflict stemming from sectarianism. Conflict between the Shiite Houthi tribe and Zaidis and Sunnis is a particular problem. The Yemeni administration tries to resolve this through security measures, and sometimes even by the use of force. However, the most effective thing to do will be to remind the sides that the Qur'an commands believers to treat all people, even with whom there are hostilities, in a pleasant manner. It is a grave error for some Muslims to attack one another with rage and hatred despite this explicit command revealed by God in verse 34 of Surat al-Fussilat. Muslims must at once make good that error by renouncing sectarian differences and be united in the way God commands. God reveals in the Qur'an that Muslims must act together as a single community:

"Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate. Remember God's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way God makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided." (Surah Al 'Imr'an, 103)

Another vital problem for Yemen is tribalism. Yemen has many more tribes when compared with other Arab countries, and there are serious conflicts among them: It is even possible to say they operate as autonomous states among themselves. Indeed, someone from one tribe will not be allowed to work in a facility owned by another; this of course has a negative impact in economic and political terms. Yet Almighty God, Who creates the members of all tribes, reveals that superiority lies not in being a member of a particular tribe, but in fearing Him:

"Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's Sight is the one with the most fear of God. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Surat al-Hujurat, 13)

Radical elements that make their presence felt in many countries are also a serious threat in Yemen. Radical elements threaten not only internal peace through their actions, but also provide justification for drone attacks by the USA.

The false religion espoused by fanaticism is one of savagery. Nobody can freely express his opinions in such a climate; people who hold such extreme views expect others to adopt their ideas and they punish those who hold dissenting views. Yet God explicitly reveals in the Qur'an that "there is no compulsion where the religion is concerned" (Surat al-Baqara, 256). It is therefore very important for the Yemen state to tell its people that Islam is a religion that espouses freedom of thought, worship and ideas, that protects the rights of all and that, most importantly, builds true liberty for everyone.

Until recently, similar problems Yemen has faced were also being experienced at full intensity in Turkey. However, there has been a marked economic improvement and rapid growth in Turkey over the last decade. The government is bringing in various rights and freedoms intended to win over our Kurdish citizens, who represent a significant part of the population. Similar measures are also being brought in regarding our Alawite brothers, a minority compared to the Sunnis. The Turkish government's determination on democracy and freedoms is bringing peace and tranquility to the country and drawing it closer to Europe.

The main factor making all these policies possible is that Turkey has a modern, in other words, correct conception of Islam that is instrumental in people of different faiths and sects successfully living together as one. These successes of Turkey's stand as an alternative model to the false conception of Islam that prevails in fanaticism. There is no doubt that this successful model can be a guide for Yemen with various problems being faced. A prosperous Yemen that has established political stability, that is devout and also modern, and that values art and science will be a source of pride and joy for all Turks as well.

Yemen, But What Sort of Yemen?

March 8th 2014

Today the country of Yemen is going through some difficult political problems. It is facing an ever-intensifying threat of internal conflicts and separatism; another major problem is high levels of poverty. So what are the most urgent problems that need to be addressed?

There are so many people who want freedom in Yemen, yet everyone has a different agenda for their pursuit of freedom; some want it for their sects, some for their tribes and some for their political views. Yet none of those groups want the same freedom for others. In addition, there are concerns that some groups -most particularly Muslim groups- might limit political and social freedom, freedom of thought and expression and go on to impede the flourishing of art and science in the country.

Yet in truth, Islam is a religion that provides every individual in a society with freedom of thought, freedom of worship, freedom of expression and effectively protects the rights of everyone. In other words, Islam offers true freedom to people.

A Sort of Yemen Where Religion Brings Freedom and Democracy.

Muslims in Yemen should advocate freedom of expression and faith for all in Yemen, regardless of group or sect. They should do so, because in the Qur'an, Muslims are commanded to respect the ideas, lifestyles and choices of others. Muslims should not oppose different ideas - and even atheistic ideologies - from being expressed. When this freedom is provided, Muslims will be able to provide a complete intellectual answer to such mistaken ideologies. Banning ideologies and thoughts is not something that would benefit Muslims; on the contrary, it would only make the communication of Islam more difficult, and Muslims' intellectual struggle harder.

A Yemen Where Sectarian Differences do not Cause Tension.

The most painful sight witnessed in Yemen would doubtlessly be Muslims directing their guns on each other, although God has clearly entrusted Muslims to each other. It is an explicit order of God that Muslims should unite. Yet despite this clear command, Muslims are grappling with disagreements and as a result, clash with each other in Yemen, just like the rest of the Middle East.

It is a grave mistake for Muslims to attack each other with hatred and rage, despite the clear command of God related in Surah Al Imran, verse 103. It is of paramount importance that Muslims quit making the mistake of sectarian divisions and unite, just as God has ordered them to. The fact that God addresses Muslims as a single community in the Qur'an is again further evidence that Muslims should unite.

A Yemen where the Administration is Qualified.

The people of Yemen want their nation to be run competently and want their administrations to adhere to the rule of law and democracy no matter how difficult things might get, and prioritize the protection of fundamental human rights. They also expect their administrators to refrain from feeding their own egos by adopting tyrannical methods, as if they consider themselves to be the absolute owners of Yemen.

To be able to be a fair administrator, as described here, one has to have a sincere belief in God and fear God. The social, political and economic practices of such God-fearing people will not be influenced or led by anyone, as their actions do not depend on the pleasure of individuals that support their administration. Furthermore, they will be consistent in their democratic, fair and just attitude.

The decisions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) – both regarding the Muslims and other people from different religions, tribes or ethnicities – has always been the epitome of compassion and justice, and therefore constitute an ideal example of a perfect democracy where everyone is treated equally regardless of their differences.

A Yemen with Perfect Social Justice.

To ensure peace and welfare in Yemen, it is essential that the poverty and the vast gaps between income groups are eliminated. This social democracy can be achieved only when Islamic moral values are truly practiced in Yemen. God says in the Qur'an that wealth should not be hoarded by certain groups; on the contrary, it should be distributed to the poor and the needy. To ensure peace and welfare in Yemen, it is essential that the poverty and the vast gaps between income groups are eliminated. This social democracy can be achieved easily when Islamic moral values are truly practiced in Yemen.

How to Achieve the Desired Yemeni Model?

All this makes it abundantly clear that there is only one way to end the injustice, conflict, terror, killing, poverty and tyranny in Yemen: The moral values of the Qur'an.

A quick look at the problems in the country will make it clear that a general moral degradation has led to a lack of love, hostility, selfishness, indifference and cruelty and that is the reason for all these untoward sights in the country. The way to solve these issues and put an end to all the other myriad problems is love, compassion, mercy, an unconditional desire to help others, being sympathetic to other's problems, altruism, common sense and reason. All of these traits belong to people who follow Qur'anic moral values to the fullest.

The most urgent action to be taken in Yemen should be an intellectual struggle by Muslims to ensure that Qur'anic moral values defeat irreligion. Needless to say, one of the quickest ways to ensure that is in spreading the miracles of creation using science, so that the weakness of faith and atheistic influences over people can be effectively conquered. Communicating Islam to all is the most paramount and urgent duty of our time for all Muslims.

The Problem of Poverty in Yemen and Regeneration

National Yemen, May 11th 2014

States need great financial power in order to meet all their social needs, from health to education and from the fight against terror to public transportation. Yemen is also experiencing similar troubles at this time when all countries, from the richest to the poorest, have been affected by the global financial crisis and when unemployment has risen.

One of the biggest economic problems in Yemen is high rate of increase in prices. The increase in prices of various basic consumer products, not considering seasonal factors – known as core inflation – is as high as 166% this year. However, the fact that price increases standing at 25% in October 2011 have now come down to about 12% is a positive sign. Unfortunately, the fact that Yemeni incomes are not rising as fast as prices is leading to increasing poverty in the country. The monthly incomes of impoverished Yemenis are not enough to meet their needs, and there is also a major problem of unemployment across the country.

Research shows that unemployment in Yemen reached 30% in 2012: This figure increases even more when one considers the families, which these people are responsible for. It is impossible to speak of manufacturing or productivity in a country with such high unemployment levels.

Imbalances between income and expenditure are not only a problem at the individual level, but also at the national level. Yemen's exports stand at \$850 million, but imports at \$1.5 billion; that naturally has an adverse effect on the country's balance of payments.

In order to close this gap and get back to a normal flow of life, the Yemeni government has also started looking for foreign assistance. Yet even if foreign assistance were to be found, it is inadequate, because the interest repayments give rise to even greater problems such as increases in prices and taxes.

The assistance given to countries today, and particularly to those under difficult economic conditions such as Yemen, is built upon interest. The high-interest loans granted by the IMF, World Bank or other international organizations all too often have seriously adverse effects on national economies.

Such assistance is generally used in providing finance for essential imports, paying public sector salaries and closing the budget deficit. These are all short-term measures and cause the country to fall into an even greater spiral of debt. No country has ever closed its budget deficit with high-interest foreign loans.

Various technical matters that need to be borne in mind if Yemen is to develop and overcome the poverty that has become a feature of its national life are as follows:

- Immediate legal amendments strengthening freedoms to meet Yemenis' material and non-material needs;
- Investments and support directed toward regeneration being spread across Yemen rather than restricted to a narrow region;

- Measures to ensure Yemenis being able to provide for themselves instead of expecting material support from wealthy nations or international organizations;
- Financing from overseas being used in revenue-generating development programs, and the prevention of their being used by individual institutions and of abuse;
- All cultural or sectarian groups in Yemen, and especially women, being given respect and equality of opportunity;
- Prevention of damage to natural resources such as water, air and soil.

Putting these arrangements into practice at once will provide a ray of hope for Yemen. Otherwise, an economy in which there is high inflation and interest rates, where investment is next to zero and where money is stuffed in safes or under mattresses will almost inevitably bring with it such problems as a high cost of living and inflation.

If there is production, however, there will be a general improvement in the national economy; the markets will come to life and that will be to the benefit of all. The hoarding of goods and money is a kind of behavior that God dislikes: In the Qur'an, it is commanded that people use their money for good causes. It is revealed in verse 34 of Surat at-Tawba that people who do not use their possessions for auspicious deeds but hoard their wealth will come to a painful end.

In a climate where people live by Islamic moral values, living conditions are arranged for the benefit of people. That is why interest is forbidden, and verse 275 of Surat al-Baqara makes it unlawful for people to be crushed under a heavy burden of debt. God reveals that interest will not cause anyone to prosper in another verse:

God obliterates interest but makes charity grow in value! God does not love any persistently ungrateful wrongdoer. (Surat al-Baqara, 276)

It is very important to have order and stability in the country if living conditions are to be improved and that stability must be in all spheres of life, from economy to social life. All Muslims have great responsibilities in that regard; nobody should simply sit around waiting for someone else to come up with a solution. We must all do what we can, because God imposes this responsibility on all believers. This can be fulfilled by preaching religion and showing people the delights religion offers in their lives.

For example, a society that believes that it is auspicious for wealth to be spent on good deeds and on God's path will use its excess wealth for such purposes: Clearly, under such a system the whole country will attain well-being. The only way to ensure that people do not regard such a conception as far-fetched and inaccessible is to teach them the moral values of the Qur'an.

It also needs to be made clear that in a life guided by the moral values of the Qur'an, since people act out of reverence of God they will work for the comfort and interests of all, not just their own. That is because unity, solidarity and mutual aid are highly important in the moral values of Islam.

In such a society, violation of others' rights would not be possible as it would be known that it is an act strictly prohibited by God. Nobody will cast their eyes on anyone else's share in a covetous manner and there will be no injustice in distribution. There will be no unjust system based on self-interest, in which the weak are crushed underfoot, and in which people seek to add other people's shares to their own, of the kind we so often see in irreligious societies that are distant from moral values and religion.

If people live by Qur'anic moral values there will be no waste in Yemen, and no wasteful consumption. People's economic levels will rise due to mutual solidarity and justice and the result will be a prosperous society. The Age of Felicity in which people lived by the moral values of the Qur'an and in which social peace and social justice was perfectly secured is one clear proof of this.

How To Ensure the National Unity of Yemen?

March 21st 2014

While European countries have been working on ways to achieve more unity, Middle Eastern countries have been busy seeking ways to further separate from each other. Clashes and conflicts have become a common sight in the region due to ethnical and sectarian differences in the population.

Yemen is one of those countries hit by separationist winds. The South Yemen Movement, founded in early 2007, has declared its desire to break away from the North, claiming that the 'South's national resources have been exploited by the central government'. To help address the issue, the Yemeni government has chosen to move to a federalized system of governance in order to prevent a breakaway.

According to the plan, Sana'a was going to be the federal capital city while Aden would be given a different status, as it is a commercial center. Yemen would be officially divided into six states; four states in the north and two in the south to be ruled by their own federal governments. This plan was also said to be giving the states independent judicial and executive powers, and would come into effect if approved with a referendum.

But will this new system really be a solution to the problems of Yemen?

To understand that, we first have to examine what powers will be given to the states and what kind of ties will be built between the states and the federal capital city of Sana'a. This has yet to be clarified.

Federal governments and unitary governments are the most common methods of administration used in the countries of the world today.

In unitary governments, the country is an inseparable whole. Even if it has cities and provinces, they are merely administrative regions and are governed by officials appointed by the central government. The central government makes administrative, judicial and financial decisions that impact the entire country. As a matter of fact, this is how the system works currently in Yemen.

In a federal government, the country is divided into multiple states and even if the nation seems to stand as one, every individual state acts like a separate region within itself. They can independently make administrative, judicial and financial decisions and put them into practice. However, their powers are not unlimited; they answer to the central government and this level of accountability is regulated by the federal constitution.

In federal systems, the issues that will occur in terms of division of power between federal administrations and the central government usually creates sluggishness in the enforcement of policies that concern the entire country, which in time may turn into large crises.

In federal systems, every state tends to look out for their own interests and naturally, it would be far more difficult to equally distribute the wealth to the entirety of the country. In summary, a shift to a federal system in Yemen has the potential to escalate separatist sentiment, rather than alleviate it.

The new states will be shaped by ethnic and sectarian differences. Therefore, it is likely that there will be regional wave of immigration, and ethnic cleansing, which would surely add fuel to the fire.

Even if there are measures that can be taken to prevent states from seceding and turning into independent countries, this happens quite frequently, and if the federalized states are based on ethnical or religious divisions, such as in the case of Quebec in Canada or Kashmir in India, the request to 'secede' inevitably comes. Varying levels of economic development also fuel such desires. For instance, Catalonia, which has a well-developed industrial base and economy, wishes to break away from Spain claiming that its resources are being used by the other states.

Needless to say, the people of Yemen will decide which option is the best for them after evaluating the pros and cons of all the alternatives being presented to them. No matter what system they choose, every Yemeni should know that being united is a command of God for Muslims, and therefore they should avoid separation and unite. God orders Muslims in the Qur'an that they should act in unison as a 'single community':

Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate. Remember God's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way God makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surah Al 'Imran, 103)

Preserving the integrity of Yemen within a democratic framework is surely possible through an alliance of good and reasonable people in Yemen, regardless of the system chosen. If Yemen can do this, it will set a great example to the Islamic world. Muslims need unity, not separation. Yemen has a great opportunity ahead: it can be the country that chose the long-awaited union of Muslims, rather than choosing artificial divisions.

How Can Yemen Best Make Use of Its Natural Wealth?

April 13th 2014

Yemen possesses considerable oil and natural gas reserves. However, nobody can say that Yemen is making full use of these. Despite having the fourth largest population in the Middle East – if we exclude Palestine – it has the lowest electricity production. Installed power per capita in Yemen is a mere 40 W, compared to 857 W in Turkey.

According to World Bank figures, only 40% of the population of Yemen have access to electricity. The electric network does not cover the entire country, and the existing electrical infrastructure is antiquated, so much so that around 25% of the electricity produced is lost during transmission. So why is energy production in Yemen, with its rich oil and natural gas resources, so inadequate? The answer is quite obvious:

Energy resources in Yemen are used for export. According to the IMF, 60% of public revenue comes from oil and natural gas sales. But according to reports in the Yemeni press, the public finds itself unable to benefit sufficiently from this revenue.

Good energy planning is essential if economic regeneration is to be started in Yemen. These plans must consist of identification of reserves, extraction, exports and the use of export revenues.

Yemen's revenues clearly need to be used for the production of facilities in the first stage. The best way of investing revenues from energy exports will be in the building of new power stations and bringing its electric grid up to date. Yemen can benefit from Turkey in that respect.

Turkey is looking for new countries to obtain natural gas from. It also possesses the capacity to build and operate energy plants. It has a large skilled workforce with energy sector experience; costs are also much lower compared to Europe and America. In return for giving oil and natural gas to Turkey, Yemen can request new power plants and electric network construction. In addition, the Yemeni government can opt for the build-operate-transfer model that has been successfully applied in Turkey: This model, summarized as service in return for goods, can put an end to the debates in Yemen about the best use of revenues and those revenues' proper distribution among regions.

Yemen's fossil-fuel energy resources are limited. The country is estimated to have three billion barrels of oil and 480 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves. If consumption continues at present rates, all the oil in the country will have been used up within 30 years and natural gas within 50 years. In truth, however, all the oil and natural gas may be used up much faster than that.

The limited nature of its energy resources is another problem Yemen needs to address. That problem can be overcome by building energy power stations based on wind, solar and small hydroelectric resources. Turkey can be an excellent partner for Yemen in achieving that solution.

In order for all these things to happen, it is first and foremost essential to overcome the security problem of the pipelines in Yemen. The pipelines and energy plants throughout the country are frequently subject to sabotage; indeed, tribes literally blackmail the government over the security of pipelines that run through their territory. The authority of the state therefore needs to be strengthened

on the one hand, while a sense of national awareness and a spirit of solidarity needs to be established in the tribes on the other.

As we have seen, in order for all the wealth of Yemen to be used in order to benefit the Yemeni people, both those in charge of that wealth and those who will make use of it must be in possession of a conscience and the only way to have a conscience is through faith. Only people of faith always act by heeding the voice of their conscience.

Consequently, there is only one solution to the injustices, turmoil, terror and poverty in Yemen – to live by the moral values of the Qur'an.

Looking at the myriad problems in Yemen in general terms, they are all caused by irrationality and emotions such as lovelessness, hatred, loathing, enmity, self-interest, selfishness, apathy and ruthlessness. The only way to resolve and totally eliminate these issues are through reason, love, affection, compassion, altruism sensitivity, self-sacrifice, friendship, understanding and common sense. These characteristics are only to be found in people who fully abide by the moral values of the Qur'an. God reveals in verses how morality of the Qur'an leads people out of darkness:

.... A Light has come to you from God and a Clear Book. By it, God guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path. (Surat al-Ma'ida, 15-16)

In another verse, God describes how there will be nothing but devastation if people do not abide by the Qur'an:

If the truth were to follow their whims and desires, the heavens and the earth and everyone in them would have been brought to ruin. No indeed! We have given them their reminder, but they have turned away from it. (Surat al-Muminun, 71)

The most important thing that needs to be done to resolve all the various problems is to ensure that people all over Yemen live by the moral values of the Qur'an.

We need to remember that people who fail to heed their conscience, who behave insensitively and uncaringly toward the poor, orphaned and wretched, who spend the possessions given them in this world on empty and foolish things, who uncaringly watch the mistreatment of women, children and the elderly, who delight in the spread of all forms of immorality and ugliness across the world and who encourage others to engage in such behavior will be held to account for this in the hereafter:

Have you seen him who denies the religion? He is the one who harshly rebuffs the orphan and does not urge the feeding of the poor. So woe to those who perform the prayer, and are forgetful of their prayer, those who show off and deny help to others. (Surat al-Ma'un, 1-7)

Therefore it is abiding by the moral values of the Qur'an that will help Yemen towards a better and brighter future for all of its peoples and lead them into an era of prosperity, plentitude and brotherhood.

Women's Place in Yemeni Society

May 1st 2014

One of the main elements for growth and stability in Yemen are the women who live there. Despite representing half the population of Yemen, women do not enjoy the same opportunities as the male half, however. This is immediately clear from statistics published by various international bodies:

According to the World Economic Forum, Yemen is the region with the worst sexual discrimination.

The great majority of women in Yemen are illiterate. More than half of women marry before the age of 18. (1)

While 73% of boys in rural parts of Yemen attend primary school, only 30% of girls do. Although discrimination based on gender was banned under a law passed in 1995, discrimination against women is still widespread, particularly in workplaces. (2)

Only 35% of women are literate in Yemen. There is also a deep economic gulf between men and women, with a female to male income ratio of 30:100. Yemen comes in at 134th in a list of 136 countries on education attainment for women. Women's education, marital, health care and human rights are all at very low levels in Yemen; divorce, custody and inheritance rights are also at very low levels. Women can only travel and hold passports with their father's or husband's permission. Female share in the Yemeni Assembly of Representatives is at the lowest level in the world, less than 1%. (3) In an investigation into women's rights by the World Economic Forum in 2013, Yemen came last on a list of 136 countries. (4)

But why are women in Yemen in this position? In fact, women in a wide range of countries throughout the Islamic world, from Morocco to Afghanistan, live under similar conditions to those in Yemen. This causes some people to blame Islam for the difficult conditions faced by women. This is clearly a blatant error, however. Unfortunately, a lack of knowledge of Islam among many people emerges on the subjects of women's rights and the importance of women in the Qur'an, as it does in so many other areas. The false idea that women should be treated as second-class people in Islam is based, not on the Qur'an, but on various forms of regional traditions, ignorance, or belief in outright nonsense.

In the Qur'an, God constantly calls for women to be watched over and protected, and imposes on men various responsibilities regarding the protection of women: However, to interpret this as meaning that men have power over women either indicates a lack of knowledge or else an evil-minded or deliberate distortion. According to the Holy Qur'an, men only watch over women, but do not govern them;

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means ... (Surat an-Nisa', 34)

As God reveals, men are charged with protecting and watching over women. Indeed, the Arabic word "qawwam" in the verse means "protector" or "guardian."

God has supported women with various material and other rights lest they be mistreated, praises them and always gives them legal priority. According to verses, women's financial positions are guaranteed after divorce; for example, assets bestowed on women cannot be taken back after divorce. Following the divorce, women's accommodation is also guaranteed. The Qur'an also prohibits men from inheriting women by force, and Muslims are also commanded to show their mothers special respect.

In addition, God reveals in verses of the Qur'an that men and women occupy an equal place in society. Our infinitely merciful Lord eliminated all distinctions that had been made between men and women during the Time of Ignorance through His verses and commanded that women be valued as they deserve. Man or woman, a person achieves superiority through the strength of their faith in God, their moral values, character and their resoluteness in living as a Muslim.

In another verse, God reveals that ***"Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and We will recompense them according to the best of what they did"*** (*Surat an-Nahl, 97*), showing that everyone, man or woman, will be exactly recompensed in this world and the hereafter, with no injustice being suffered by anyone. This is all evidence of God's mercy on His believing servants.

Structurally, Yemen is preparing for great changes. That can be utilized as a major opportunity for women to assume a respected and more influential place in society. The constitution currently being prepared might be amended to address the subject of women enjoying the same rights as they do in modern Western societies. Legal changes about the strengthening of women's rights and the protection of women can be reinforced by amendments to both criminal and civil law, and not just restricted to the constitution.

The elimination of discrimination against women in Yemen, preventing violence against women and most important of all, recognizing women's educational rights, are all important steps that can – and should – be taken toward the development of the country. These things must not remain limited as initiatives of a single party; greater rights for women must be made a national policy supported by all parties. Increasing women's right to representation in the Assembly of Representatives would be a good place to start.

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The Lowest Common Denominators the Parties in Yemen Can Agree on

May 3rd 2014

Politics in many countries, from Argentina to Canada and from South Korea to Turkey, takes place by means of political parties. Political parties are indispensable to modern politics and democracies. Parties may be regarded as the main tool of democracy or a source of oppression, but they are nonetheless links between the state and the people. Some of the parties in Yemen that have kept this bond alive are:

The Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the General People's Congress (GPC), the Islaah Party (The Yemeni Congregation for Reform), the Peoples Nasserite Reformation Party, the Liberation Front Party, the Nasserite Democratic Party, the League of the Sons of Yemen, the Federation of Popular Forces, the National Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, the National Democratic Front, Al Haq Party, the Yemen League Party, and the National Social Party. As of 2003, the active parties are the GPC, Islaah, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the Nasserite Unionist Party, and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party.

Some of these parties espouse liberal policies and others an Islamic conception of politics. There are also parties in Yemen, like the Ba'ath parties in Iraq and Syria, that support pan-Arab nationalism.

Parties in Yemen try to win elections, and thus gain power, by promising to do what society wants. Yet it goes without saying that some parties may fail to resolve national problems or even to identify problems.

Although the repression caused by Ba'athist regimes in Arab countries is obvious, there are still parties in Yemen that claim there can be a better future through socialist or Nasserite policies.

The failures of the Ba'ath parties that were active until recently in Iraq and Syria inflicted terrible disasters on their countries. On the other hand, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt was overthrown due to concerns it would exclude all those who did not support it. There is no civil war like that in Syria in Egypt now, but there is also no democracy. There is also a good deal of tension over a wave of turmoil and violence that may explode at any moment.

In contrast to these poor examples, there is still a functioning democracy in Yemen. It is vitally important for democracy to keep functioning, no matter how great the ideological gulfs between the parties so it is therefore essential for the parties in Yemen to compromise on a lowest common denominator. Moreover, it is also possible to establish those denominators without changing or restricting parties' ideologies. The main points that the parties need to agree on in order to maintain Yemen's national integrity and democratic life are as follows:

- To take care over protecting Yemen's status as a state respecting the rule of law;
- To oppose any kind of totalitarian regime, whether of the right or left;
- To oppose policies based on ethnic or sectarian separation;

- To support human rights and the free expression in society of all opinions and beliefs, regardless of what ideology or world view they may represent;
- To reject the use of violence in order to impose one's own views.

The last and most important element is for all the political parties in Yemen to declare their unequivocal devotion to democracy. The greatest responsibility for preserving democracy in the country lies with Yemeni Muslims because freedom of thought, belief and expression – which we attribute to democracy – lie at the heart of Islam.

Some people imagine that democracy first appeared in ancient Greece. Yet it is God Who teaches people democracy. All of the prophets, from Adam (pbuh) on, have been representatives of freedom, free thinking and respect for ideas. Concepts such as liberty, justice, oppression of none, treating everyone as a first-class citizen, trust in, and respect for, all people and not judging anyone because of their ideas – which are all principles that come to mind when democracy is mentioned – exist at the heart of the moral values of the religion. People have learned them through the Divine faiths revealed by God and have witnessed their finest examples at times when people lived by Divine religions.

Like all the other prophets, many events representing a democratic way of thinking occurred during the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). People of various faiths, tongues, races and cultures lived side by side in the lands where the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) lived. It was very hard for these communities to live together in peace and trust as it was difficult to contain those groups that tried to incite hatred amongst them for each other; one group might immediately be angered and attack another over the slightest word or action. However, our Prophet's (pbuh) conception of democracy and just rule was as much a source of peace and confidence for these communities as it was for Muslims. Christians, Jews and pagans were treated justly in the Age of Felicity. In line with God's words that "***There is no compulsion in the religion...***" (Surat al-Baqara, 256), our Prophet (pbuh) told everyone of the moral values of the faith, but then left everyone free to choose for themselves.

When people live by Almighty God's religion in the way commanded in the Qur'an, then there will be the true justice, democracy, respect and love for which people long. By God's grace, very soon democracy, brotherhood, love, friendship and peace will reign across the world, not just in Yemen, and in a way never seen before, and people will at last enjoy the most abundant joy and prosperity.

The Importance of Individual Rights and Freedoms in Yemen

April 20th 2014

Efforts are being made in Yemen to build a new constitution and a new form of administration based on it. Passing new laws and implementing those laws is one of the most rational measures that can be taken against the risk of fragmentation without resorting to weapons. The aim is to build national unity in Yemen with this new constitution and the organizational structure it seeks to establish.

Of course, the structure and functioning of the state is not the only purpose of constitutions; it must also embody features intended to secure the happiness and well-being of Yemenis. The positive and negative obligations of the state must therefore be set forth.

Positive obligations include the duties of the state; in other words, the rights that the citizens expect from the state. Health, housing, work and social security are all rights of that kind. Such rights naturally impose various duties on the state in the social domain. These include taking measures regarding the protection of children and the family, the right to education, guarantees regarding the protection of those in agriculture and stockbreeding, the prevention of arbitrary confiscation of possessions and lands, and the right to work. Since these obligations entitle the citizens to demand something from the state, they are also known as "demand rights."

The majority of these rights concern the social and economic spheres and are the result of the idea of a social state. "Demand rights" enshrined in the Yemeni constitution will determine how far the state supports and watches over its people.

Yemenis need to know that application of some positive obligations is restricted with the means available to the Yemeni state. For example, the development and care of children of working women may be described as an obligation of the state in law; however, if the state cannot find the funds to open nursery schools and day care centers for children, it will be impossible to implement.

Negative obligations concern those situations in which the state is obliged to refrain from interference with the citizenry. These obligations are also known as rights of negative status, and involve a negative approach, or non-involvement. Since these rights will protect Yemenis against state and society, they can also be referred to as "protective rights."

Two of the main negative obligations are ensuring the right to life by providing security and the prevention of torture by the state. Some other negative obligations of the state are:

- The right to a fair trial in court;
- The state respecting citizens' right of privacy;
- Yemeni citizens being able to freely express their opinions in the country;
- People in Yemen being free to choose their faith and fulfill its requirements;
- No Yemeni being subjected to discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion or anything else;

- The establishment of institutions in which citizens can effectively seek their rights.

There is no reason why even low levels of income should restrict individual rights and freedoms. No matter what the form of administration, so long as negative obligations in particular are set out thoroughly and implemented with care, a positive contribution will result that provides for the peace of mind and prosperity of Yemen's citizens.

Therefore, the constitution to be drawn up is not only a necessity in order to establish national unity, but must also be regarded as an opportunity to raise quality of life.

There is no doubt that the definition of the state's positive and negative obligations under the law will be a turning point for the development of human rights in Yemen. However, in order to build up a culture of human rights in the country, the fastest route forward regarding this subject is to educate Yemenis.

The most important guarantor of human rights is a nation with an awareness of those rights. Yemenis having an awareness of their rights will prevent their violation.

This education in the awareness of human rights must be based on the moral values of the Qur'an because religion is the foundation of human rights. Our religion teaches us concepts regarding moral virtue, what is right and wrong and how to be just people.

Democracy and people being free to choose their own faith are excellent outcomes of religious moral values. All constitutions stem from religion and nobody could have drawn up a constitution without religion. Right, wrong and human rights were all taught to us by God. Everyone can choose his own faith and live his life as he wishes.

According to the Qur'an, nobody can be coerced into changing his faith, and no life style can be imposed through violence. As God reveals in verse 256 of Surat al-Baqara, **"There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned..."** And displeasure with others' ideas, beliefs or lifestyles must not be expressed through insults, violence, and aggression. Instead, we must follow verse 6 of Surat al-Kafirun and say, "You have your faith and I have my faith."

Laws based on religious moral values stating that you cannot impose what you believe to be true on others must be included in the Yemeni constitution. If the people of Yemen act with that knowledge, it will be possible to establish peace and security throughout the entire community.

Under the new constitution, the state must be defined as a vehicle for establishing the happiness and well-being of the Yemeni people. The rights of the people must also be guaranteed under the constitution and sanctions must be imposed against any violations of it. In this manner, the future of the Yemeni people can be secured with freedom, peace, and happiness for all.

Terror Is Again at the Top of Yemen's Agenda

May 18th 2014

The great Soma disaster in Turkey, referendums in Ukraine, civil war in Syria, Boko Haram in Nigeria: These are the main headlines on the world news. In Yemen, on the other hand, one of the topics of the agenda is again terror.

Ali Asghar Asadi, Iran's economic attaché in Yemen, was fatally wounded in a drive-by shooting. The other terror acts that occurred in the country during recent weeks are as follows:

Colonel Salih ibn Sabid lost his life in front his house from an armed attack by some unidentified people. In the central al-Bayda province, two Yemeni soldiers were killed in an ambush by unidentified gunmen and two guards suffered injuries.

In the province of Shabwa an assassination attempt was made against the military convoy of the Yemeni Defense Minister Muhammad Nasir Ahmad.

Four al-Qaeda militants were killed in the vicinity of the presidential palace where they fought against security forces.

In the Azzan area of Shabwa province in the south of the country, more than 30 al-Qaeda militants were killed in operations carried out by the security forces with the slogan, "Altogether for a Terror-Free Yemen." There are those who perpetrate terrorism claiming that they supposedly act in the name of Islam in Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria – even in Europe and America – on one side and there are those sincere Muslims who say Islam is a religion of peace and commands compassion and justice.

Many world leaders, Islamic scholars, prominent media outlets, television channels and radio stations have several times conveyed to their own communities that Islam in no way allows violence and that it commands peace among people and nations. Those circles that examine Islam closely and know the true Islam commanded in the Qur'an clearly reveal that the words "terror" and "Islam" are definitely not compatible, and Divine religions never allow such savagery.

However it is not possible to say that all these efforts have accomplished the desired result. Those who commit acts of terrorism on behalf of so-called Islam continue to be propped up by some Muslim circles. Indeed, Jalal Baidi, one of the al-Qaeda leaders in Yemen, expressed for the first time that some armed men from local tribes joined them in their fight against the Yemeni army. The Islamic world needs to ponder upon the reasons for this and seek solutions.

For the Islamic world to get rid of the scourge of terror, an all-out spiritual campaign must be launched. Both international institutions such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Muslim countries must make greater efforts to correct some misconceptions about Islam. They must explain that acts and practices of terror organizations such as al-Qaeda and Boko Haram are at odds with the Qur'an; that in the Qur'an killing an innocent person is equated to killing all of humanity; that Islam forbids terror, violence, oppression and tyranny; that according to the Qur'an peace, love, self-sacrifice, justice and compassion need to prevail. By employing state-of-the-art means of technology

such as books, magazines, movies, and using the means of social media, newspapers, TV programs and voluntary speakers, the message of true Islam – which is based on love and peace – must be communicated to even the most remote corners of the Islamic world. This is the most urgent responsibility of Muslims. Without serious education efforts, it would be essentially impossible for the Islamic world to rid itself of terrorism through military operations or drone strikes. Against terrorism and the mistaken doctrines that produce it, a very robust scientific and philosophical campaign is essential. All televisions, radio stations, newspapers and the entirety of the media in Islamic countries must participate in this campaign.

In this campaign one point must be made clear: Although these terrorists have Islamic names and their religion is recorded as "Islam" on their identity cards, the murders they commit can never be referred to as the "Terror of Islam" just as how such acts would not be referred to as the "Terror of Christianity" if they were Christians or "Terror of Judaism" if they were Jews. It is impossible to kill people in the name of a Divine religion because as per the morality of religion, a human being is considered as a being who carries the soul of God and thus the utmost value is attached to them.

Unless otherwise forgiven by God, killing innocent people is a grave sin punishable by the torment of hell. A person who lives by the morality of the Qur'an and has a fear of God in his heart would never dare to kill a person. Being aware that a person will give an account of all his deeds he has done throughout his life in this world in God's Presence deters Muslims from assuming an attitude incompatible with the Qur'an, committing a deed proclaimed to be unlawful by God or resorting to violence and terror.

No matter the religion a perpetrator of such violence claims to belong to, an attack committed in the name of "religion" is actually also an attack against the religion itself. True religion commands love, compassion and peace. Terror, on the other hand, is merciless, and seeks only mindless bloodshed, killing and suffering. Consequently while seeking a perpetrator for a terror act, we need to seek the source not in genuine piety, but in radicalism or irreligion. The names of the terrorists or their religion is not important; a terrorist who kills in the name of religion is simply a murderer with no fear of God whose sole purpose is to shed blood and to make afflict as much pain as possible on innocent people; the more proper definition of such an individual is a psychopath. Terrorist acts which kill innocent people can not be the product of Islam, but of a profoundly disturbed mindset which considers human beings as mere lumps of matter.

In Islam based on the morality of the Qur'an, there is by no means any room for terrorism. On the contrary, according to Islam the acts referred to as "terror" – that is acts of violence committed against innocent lives – is a great crime and it is incumbent upon Muslims to prevent these acts and instead bring about peace and justice to the world.

The Corruption Eating Away at Yemen from the Inside

June 1st 2014

If you look at world history you will see three primary reasons why states undergo great upheavals, or even collapse; wars, political instability and socioeconomic problems. Most of the time, these three are inter-related and can distinguishably reveal themselves. However there is usually another cause that develops silently but eats away at the state from the inside; corruption.

Corruption is one of the main reasons behind socioeconomic problems, one of the three causes of the collapse of states. This player is not alone in the economic world. It is accompanied by bribery and misappropriation, and when those three combine together the result would be the inevitable economic death of the state.

These three players have actively taken parts in Yemen for a very long time. A report prepared by The London Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, in 2013 on the subject of corruption and capital flight in Yemen makes this abundantly clear. (1)

According to the report, 46% of Yemenis are malnourished, and the reason for this is the elite who exploit the country's resources in order to accumulate wealth and then send it out of the country. (2) The report states that not only is this money acquired illegally, but tax is also avoided by sending it abroad. Yemen stands in fifth place in the world in terms of illegal capital flight. The total amount fleeing from the country between the years 1990-2008 is twelve billion dollars. (3) The report goes on to say that the source of a part of this capital is credits obtained from overseas, and that since international institutions are aware of this matter, they are unwilling to issue credit for Yemen. Another important point stressed in the report is that there is also no mechanism in Yemen to prevent the misappropriation of credits obtained. (4) In subsequent sections the report states that corruption is widespread in the military as well; there are many soldiers involved in fuel smuggling and human trafficking and that there is no civilian authority in the country to prevent this. (5)

There may be deficiencies or errors in this report, but it is nonetheless impossible to deny that there is massive corruption and misappropriation going on in Yemen.

New legal arrangements could be introduced in Yemen in order to prevent corruption, and new regulatory bodies could be established, as in many other countries but mostly, the reasons for this situation in Yemen need to be closely examined. Such examination will show that instilling a fear of God in the hearts of every official will produce more precise results than installing a regulator in every institution.

There is a huge difference in behavior between someone who knows that he will go to God and be rewarded (or punished) for his actions and someone who imagines he will not have to account for anything. Someone with no fear of God can commit all kinds of wickedness and turn a blind eye to all manner of immorality out of self-interest. For example, someone capable of coveting even the property of an orphan out of worldly self-interest or some other mundane reason will do so because he has no fear or awe of God. If he believed in God and the Day of Reckoning with certain knowledge he would never do something for which he cannot account in the Hereafter. While those with no fear of

God will be capable of stealing from the poor without batting an eye, those who fear God would share all they have with their brothers, even though they themselves are in need.

"You who have faith! Give away some of the good things you have earned and some of what We have produced for you from the earth. Do not have recourse to bad things when you give, things you would only take with your eyes tight shut! Know that God is Rich Beyond Need, Praiseworthy." (Surat al-Baqara, 267)

This fine moral conception is the result of a healthy fear of God. Therefore, when all members of society fear God, all phenomena that will be displeasing to Him, such as injustice, misappropriation, bribery and corruption, will come to an end.

Another reason for the cruelty and immorality of some people is their passionate devotion to the life of this world. Such people are perhaps worried about ending up in poverty or having no guarantees for their future; because of those reasons, many people make habits out of crimes such as bribery, corruption, theft, bearing false witness or prostitution. However for a believer, the approval of God is more important than anything else in the world. Such a person will scrupulously avoid anything he knows will cause him to lose the approval of God. He will fear God alone, and neither death, nor hunger nor any other troubles will turn him away from the true path.

Consequently, someone who fears God will never compromise on the moral values of the Qur'an, no matter the circumstances; at the same time, such a person will be completely trustworthy. He will always behave in a conscientious manner. Even if he is alone, since he knows that God always sees and hears him he will never behave wrongly or cruelly under any circumstances.

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One of the Dozens of Problems Facing Yemen Is Immigration

June 30th 2014

Every year, thousands of people leave their homes and migrate to Yemen from other parts of Africa, or else abandon their homes, friends and relatives in Yemen and go to other countries. Some do this because of poverty while others out of fear for their lives. Whatever the reason, migration is one of the greatest problems facing Yemen. Whether it stems from domestic or external conditions, a solution needs to be found because uncontrolled migration can bring about significant problems.

In April of 2013, the Yemeni Department of Immigration (YDI) announced that the number of people who had left their homes because of conflicts and fled to different regions within the country had passed half a million. Set up in 2009 to provide migrants with food and housing assistance, the department said that migrants are now in much worse condition. Due to the World Food Program (WFP) stepping up its assistance for Syrian refugees, the amount of food aid reaching migrants within Yemen has fallen by half.

Another problem concerning migration for Yemen is the migration overseas of an educated work force seeking a better income. More than one million have emigrated for that reason. Although losing well-educated and qualified people is a problem for Yemen, it is also not without its benefits; Yemenis who migrate overseas contribute indirectly to the country's economy by the foreign remittances they send home to their families. These migrants may also take part in voluntary activities on behalf of Yemen in the countries they live in.

The number of those fleeing to neighboring countries due to conflicts or poverty is quite large. There are estimated to be 900,000 Yemeni migrants in the Middle East and various African countries and some 700,000 in Saudi Arabia.

When the civil war in Somalia broke out, some 60,000 Yemenis returned home, but that was not the sole source of migration to Yemen from Somalia. The instability in Somalia led to an explosion in the number of migrants from Yemen to Somalia. Various authorities now say there are 700,000 Somalis in Yemen.

Ethiopia is another source of migration to Yemen in East Africa. There are an estimated 10,000 Ethiopians in Yemen. However, it also needs to be said that these figures are not entirely reliable, since they are not confirmed by official bodies.

According to a U.N. report published in 2008, 50,000 migrants reached Yemen from Africa a year.

Migrants generally reach Yemen from East Africa by sea, under very difficult conditions, and usually fall into the hands of human traffickers. Most migrants, who give their last few pennies to the traffickers, are brought to Yemen in rickety boats. These boats are very frail and lack even the most basic amenities, and are of dubious seaworthiness.

In order to avoid being apprehended by the security forces, the traffickers prefer to drop the migrants off in remote areas rather than in harbors. Indeed, they sometimes throw them into the sea

miles from shore, or else sink the boats. The boats that carry the migrants often deliver them to their deaths; many migrants drown at sea.

Reaching the Yemeni shore does not mean salvation for the migrants. Even if they are legally admitted to Yemen, they still have to live under very difficult conditions in the country, where unemployment is very high.

Somalis generally work for very low wages doing jobs that Yemenis are unwilling to do. A Somali migrant in Yemen earns an average of \$50 a month. In addition to the hard work they do, migrants are generally despised.

Such behavior is totally unbecoming of a Muslim. In verse 83 of Surat al-Baqara, our infinitely merciful Lord commands us that in order to establish social peace, the poor should not be despised, but treated well.

No Muslim must forget that the Muslims of Medina embraced the Muslims who migrated there in the time of our Prophet (pbuh) with sincerity and love. Muslims must adopt them as role models.

The Islamic world now needs the solidarity personified by the spirit of brotherhood among the pilgrims and the Ansar. Feelings such as hatred and ruthlessness must be purged from people's hearts, and replaced by brotherhood, compassion, love, affection and positive thoughts.

Believers have a responsibility to treat other believers with enormous compassion and modesty; any other behavior is incompatible with the Qur'an. Arrogance, jealousy, intolerance, rude speech and quarrelsomeness are features of deniers, not of Muslims. Therefore, a believer who has made such a mistake because of his lower self must immediately pull himself together, seek shelter in God and behave like a true believer.

Key to Democracy and Development in Yemen: Education

June 22nd 2014

Yemen faces serious problems in many areas like politics, economy, health or security. Yet, one of those problems, in other words education, or the lack of it, prevents many of those other problems from getting a healthy solution. This challenge becomes even more obvious when the period and quality of education Yemeni citizens receive is compared to the rest of the world.

Literacy rate is around 60%, and goes down as low as to 30% in the case of women. This means, if you were to walk up to a Yemeni with a piece of paper with an address on it, the probability that he won't be able to help you with it is quite high because almost one in every two Yemenis do not read and write. The universities and other educational institutions in Yemen paint an even worse picture.

It is critical that the education problem in Yemen is solved immediately. Just like there is no highly educated but underdeveloped country in the world, you cannot find any country that is under-educated but developed and industrialized. The research shows that the increase in income per capita and other economic indicators are directly related to education levels. A country with a low literacy rate will have a low income per capita, as it is highly unlikely that an illiterate person will find a lucrative job. An illiterate person will either work in manual labor or in the best-case scenario, will be a craftsman.

The shift of Yemen from traditional agriculture society to an industrialized civilized society and even its endeavors to get a stronger democracy, have everything to do with improving education levels and quality. Indeed some economists managed to accurately guess the income per capita of a country when they were given the literacy rates of it.

With the increasing education quality in Yemen, a social awareness will be created, leading way to new areas of interest like art and science. As people become more educated, their prejudices will change, they will be more inquisitive and more respectful of differences.

The increasing education will also spearhead the very much needed openness policy in Yemen. People will more closely follow up everything that's going on around them and the developments in the politics. Naturally, an illiterate person will not be curious if the funds allocated by UNESCO for education quality in Yemen is duly used or not, because he has no means of finding out.

Improved education levels will also contribute to the political and administrative development in Yemen. People will be more engaged and involved in politics and administration, both in the form of doing politics themselves and deciding the progress of it.

Even the awareness of the importance of the country's integrity will rise with a better education. As children are taught about love for their countries, they will know that their countries count just as much as their tribes or sects.

Surely, the content of the education is just as important as the period and the accessibility of it. If a child is taught a perverse ideology such as that this life is a struggle and that the best way to fight

injustice is through revolution, he will snatch a gun in the first opportunity he gets and try to create his own justice.

If children are taught not the true religion sent by God, but idolatry and invented rules passed on from their ancestors, he will end up interfering with the lifestyles of everyone else, and try to impose his choices and lifestyle on everyone else. They will even believe that those who do not believe in their radical system, which has no place in the Qur'an, should be 'fought against' and thus will adopt a perverse path.

However, the Qur'an is very clear about what is allowed and what is banned. The number of things God forbids for people is very few; all the world except for these few unlawful things are lawful. Consequently, living by the religious morality is very easy. Muslims are free to the utmost within these borders that God set. In the Qur'an, God explains: ***"He does not desire difficulty for you" (Surat al-Baqara, 185).***

Just like in many Arabic countries in the Middle East, lack of education which plagues mostly women, form the basis of extremist movements. Half of the female population of Yemen is illiterate and while they are raised as Muslims, they cannot read the Qur'an. They can learn about their religion only from the people around them. Some of them know Islam only to the extent that they have been taught by their families and mistake extremism for 'real Islam'. And because they can't read, they cannot check to see if what they are told is really in the Qur'an or not. This is surely not their fault. All because of this, many women accept to be seen as 'second-class citizens' due to the superstitions shown as a part of religion. Surely this is not all. The children raised by such women also grow up under the influence of a similar ideology and when they hold a position in the society, they work to keep this flawed ideology alive.

It is crucial that the Fact of Creation, the basis of all Divine religions, is added to the curriculum as a rebuttal to the theory of evolution. Compassion, love, respect, understanding, reason, forgiveness and other virtues cannot be reasonably expected from people who are raised with the lie that he is an advanced form of apes. Therefore it is of paramount importance that people are taught that 'all humans are valuable beings with souls,' who are created for a certain purpose like the rest of the universe.

Countries Swamped by Debt and Interest

July 22nd 2014

As stated earlier, separatist movements, terrorism, assassinations, mismanagement and poverty are the first concepts that come to mind when Yemen is mentioned. Similar problems to those in Yemen are spreading rapidly across the Middle East. Every Yemeni has the right to national unity, to live in peace, to be well governed and to live in peace and prosperity.

Yet ideas and practices concerning the political management of countries and international relations are literally treading these rights underfoot. The problems still fail to be resolved, despite all the various models, foreign aid and work by international organizations.

Let us consider the economic problems. Yemen's total debt as of 2013 was 46.8% of GDSP. That means when a Yemeni spends 100 riyals he is only contributing 53 riyals to the national economy. Inflation in Yemen in 2013 was 17%. In other words, 9 of those 53 riyals disappear with inflation, leaving 44 riyals. So does every Yemeni contribute 44 riyals to the national economy out of every 100 riyals he makes a year, excluding debt and inflation? Definitely not! It is much harder to earn that than one would think, because of the high unemployment levels in Yemen, 30%. In other words, 30 out of 100 Yemenis never see 100 riyals. This means that two out of every three Yemenis live below the poverty threshold.

Many people in the world and in Yemen live below starvation level. The Yemeni state needs foreign aid in order to survive. The size of the Yemeni economy in 2013 was \$39 billion, while its foreign debt stood at \$7.2 billion. This is a huge ratio. Neither is it enough for Yemen to find such a huge total debt every year, because the compound interest on this aid increases the outstanding debt all the time.

The present international economic order is based on the interest system. The high-interest loans given by banks have a negative effect on the national economy in many respects. Countries like Yemen that need overseas money increase interest rates. Those who wish to earn greater revenues thanks to high interest rates establish a flow of money from outside the country to inside. The state seeks to make use of this money entering the country, but other economic problems then raise their heads. Since interest rates rise, the costs of loans from banks rise. It becomes impossible to invest by taking out loans. On the other hand, people are encouraged to invest their money in banks rather than in manufacturing. It is much easier to make money out of interest than by working.

The main reason for the global economic crisis is the interest system. Our Lord has made this system unlawful. Yet it is shamelessly implemented in societies based on self-interest because it is depicted as attractive, and people never consider that it will actually harm them, and even think it will benefit them. Since the interest system is made to look attractive, people are encouraged to invest their money in banks rather than production or investment. Since there can be no production or money circulation in the markets under a system in which people invest their money in banks, or keep it hidden under the mattress or in safes, financial consequences such as high costs of living, inflation and economic collapse are inevitable. This is what happened in the global financial crisis; production

coming to a halt, no circulation of money and money being kept in banks to earn interest all brought the economy down.

Yet Almighty God advises us to avoid interest in verses, and tells of the scourges that will result from it;

You who believe! Do not feed on usury, multiplied and then remultiplied. Have fear of God so that hopefully you will be successful. (Surah Al 'Imran, 130)

Those who practice usury will not rise from the grave except as someone driven mad by satan's touch. That is because they say, "Trade is the same as usury." But God has permitted trade and He has forbidden usury. Whoever is given a warning by his Lord and then desists, can keep what he received in the past and his affair is God's concern. But all who return to it will be the Companions of the Fire, remaining in it timelessly, forever. God obliterates usury but makes charity grow in value! God does not love any persistently ungrateful wrongdoer. (Surat al-Baqara, 275-276)

Political Life in Yemen

July 14th 2014

Yemenis deserve a life in which justice, moral virtue and honesty prevail at all times. One of the areas where this is most important in Yemen is politics. A politician is someone who assumes responsibility for a large number of people who look to him for solutions and service. That person must decide matters on the basis of justice, observe no distinctions between people, recognize people who are in need and respond to those needs right away. In providing that service, he must always work together with experts and assign duties to competent people. Defects, interruptions and delays must be detected right away, many solutions must be produced and the capacity to make rapid decisions is essential. He must be able to see what is urgent and get services where they are needed, without delay.

However, politics has stopped being a sphere of service for some people today and has turned into a business based on self-interest. The aim has become simply to attain a position, to maintain that position under all circumstances and, if possible, to climb to even higher posts. That being the case, all manner of immorality committed to achieve that aim is regarded as legitimate.

One can see situations of that kind in all countries. There are hundreds of examples of officials resigning over corruption and markets being distorted for personal gain. For example, in many countries governed as dictatorships, while the people live in terrible poverty, fighting drought and epidemic diseases, the rulers enjoy enormous wealth and luxury; previous administrations in Iraq, Syria and Tunisia are clear instances of this. Mobuto Sese Seko, the former ruler of Zaire (today's Democratic Republic of the Congo), would bring his personal hairdresser from France every month by private plane while the people would fight over a single loaf of bread. Mobutu had all the country's underground resources and diamond beds signed over to himself and opened them up for exploitation by Western countries, yet ignored the plight of his people mired in tribal conflicts.

One can see such administrations where people do not live by the values of the Qur'an because where there is no religion, there is in one sense no justice, mutual aid, compassion, love, respect or honesty, either. Everyone will be out for his own interests in a spirit of intense greed. God draws attention to this danger in a verse:

When he leaves you, he goes about the earth corrupting it, destroying crops and animals. God does not love corruption. (Surat al-Baqara, 205)

As we have seen, the people described in the above verse will always exist so long as people do not adhere to the Qur'an. Yet in a country ruled by people of good conscience who fear God, nobody will be allowed to treat anyone else unfairly, all needs will be met and new solutions and services will be provided all the time. People who live by Islamic values will provide all kinds of services for no reward. The reward for services and hard work undertaken for God's approval is to be expected in the Hereafter, not this one. The messengers sent by God to preach the faith have always been subjected to various false accusations as people have always sought to find ulterior motives behind these messengers calling on them to worship God and live by the faith. The envoys are reported to have issued the following reminder to their peoples:

"My people! I do not ask you for any wage for it. My wage is the responsibility of Him Who brought me into being. So will you not use your intellect?" (Surah Hud, 51)

Relations between self-interested groups around national administrations frequently enter the political agenda. As in Yemen, these interest groups may sometimes be tribes, sometimes organized criminal groups and sometimes multinational companies.

In such countries where people do not live by Islamic values, and where rank and duties are not determined by qualities and abilities, the first thing that someone who achieves an important position will do is to place his friends in important posts and protect and look after them. That is why 'placemen' are so important for many parties and politicians; in other words, nobody considers the interests of the nations, and service is never what matters. Personal and political preferences and even nepotism come to the fore instead. As a result of this way of thinking, service concentrates on political constituencies, rather than cities and villages that need it. Instead of the urgent need of a village with no water or electricity being met, the interests of those who may possibly support electoral campaigns are considered instead.

As we have seen, a failure to live by Qur'anic values, whether that be in Yemen or some other part of the world, leads to the existence of administrations that turn a blind eye to all kinds of perverse activity. Since people do not fear God, they do not behave justly, compassionately or morally; since they never think they will have to account for themselves in the Hereafter, they are capable of all kinds of wickedness and immorality. What everyone who wishes to eliminate such a climate and ensure that mankind has a bright future needs to do is therefore to live by Qur'anic moral values and ensure that others do so, too. One of the greatest responsibilities attendant upon a Muslim is to tell people of God's commandments about moral values, to encourage people to live by them and to forbid any other kind of behavior. People who ignore this fact, or who postpone what they should be doing, and who leave the work to others, should fear having to account for that heedlessness in the hereafter.

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Surah Al 'Imran, 104)

Why Is Military Spending Significant?

August 17th 2014

Countries wrestling with debt and unemployment at a time when an ongoing economic crisis is still badly affecting the world are making no concessions when it comes to military expenditure. Many countries continue to spend a significant part of their revenues on arms and the military.

The amount spent on arms across the world in 2012 was \$1.75 trillion. With the amount spent on armaments in one year, 120,000 fully equipped hospitals could be opened, or 1.75 million schools. With that same money you could also feed 200,000,000 people for a year.

So what is the military spending position in Yemen?

Yemen spent \$1.25 billion on its military in 2012. Many international bodies and observers are of the opinion that this military expenditure is grossly excessive: Income per capita in Yemen is only \$2,500. In other words, the earnings of some 500,000 people in Yemen are used entirely for military purposes.

Why does Yemen, with national revenues far below the global average, feel the need for such great military spending? Yemen has been the scene of many coups and attempted coups in the past. Politicians and soldiers have been assassinated, and many civil conflicts and uprisings have occurred in the country. All these threats emanating from inside Yemen have led to great security concerns in the state for many years. The security forces in Yemen are organized, not against any external threat or common crime within the country, but against political instability and domestic enemies.

Therefore, every incoming administration regards it as absolutely essential to establish control over the military or police in order to remain in power. That control is only possible by raising the wages of the military and police force to the highest level on a regular basis and to endow them with a wide range of privileges. That of course means a massive amount of spending from the state treasury.

Nothing can be more natural than for a country to foresee external and internal threats against it and to take precautions against them; indeed, that is one of the primary responsibilities of the state. However, if it does not consider various factors in doing so, this can lead to severe problems in the national economy and structure.

Defense expenditures are high in many Middle Eastern countries; the difference between Yemen and other Arab countries is that its defense spending is largely focused on personnel costs than buying arms. In contrast to countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, spending on weapons and technological improvements is at a low level, while paying salaries occupies a very important place. Enrolment in the military is used as a form of job creation, rather than meeting security needs. Therefore, rather than the military being highly developed, modern and with a strong defensive capacity, it is technologically weak, cumbersome and difficult to manage.

Soldiers' salaries must not be used for social or political purposes other than military objectives. If that happens, the result will be people who are soldiers only on paper, yet who contribute nothing to national defense and security. Troops who do not really exist but whose salaries are paid every month

will begin to be used as vehicles for transferring funds to please the tribes or ensure their loyalty, and this will lead to big problems.

Politicians must not establish military and security forces out of tribes or relatives they regard as loyal to them. If that happens, the army stops being a national army and becomes the armed force of one particular group; that, of course, leads to the targeting of those who cannot be part of the army and their arming themselves by illegal means.

Another important matter is the establishment of transparency in military spending and arms purchases from overseas, and a regulatory mechanism for that is of primary importance for the stability of Yemen.

The problems with the military and security forces are not restricted to compromised security. They also involve widespread material losses and economic collapse. If efficient use cannot be made of the military, anarchy and turmoil caused by revolts and terrorist actions will prevent investment in the country. Terrorist attacks aimed at damaging the economic infrastructure of Yemen not only prevent regeneration in the regions concerned, but also destroy existing means. Economic obstructions lead to backwardness in many areas, and particularly social life.

Military spending on the fight against terror represents a separate burden for every country. Material resources that should be used to raise people's standards of living are instead being diverted to military spending, and this has a damaging effect on the national economy.

Therefore, in moving toward rearranging and restructuring its army, Yemen must also try to ensure security using methods that are not based on arms. The only way of combating terror and domestic conflict is not through resorting to arms. Students in Yemeni schools must be taught that sectarian division is incompatible with Islam, that Zaidis and Shiites and Sunnis are all real Muslims, and that they should not fight against one another. The moral virtues of Islam that ensure peace and goodness must be emphasized on a frequent basis, and people must be taught the difference between fanaticism and the true faith.

Efforts must be made, in the military and in schools, to prevent Yemenis from being raised as people devoid of affection and compassion, who regard life as a battleground, who regard love and solidarity as unnecessary and who are cruel and selfish. That will prevent the emergence of impoverished young people, who have fallen into the clutches of the notorious drug khat and of corruption, who are morally degenerate and whose only desire is money, as enemies of their own country.

Houthis Are the Brothers of All Yemenis

September 5th 2014

Yemen is on the brink of new conflict and tension. Protests sparked by the leader of the Houthis in Yemen, Abdulmalik Houthi, calling on the government to resign are growing. Yemen is a country where such tensions frequently arise.

Uprisings in 2011, when former head of state Ali Abdullah Saleh was forced to step down, were followed by actions by the secessionist Southern Movement and attacks by al-Qaeda.

The secessionist Southern Movement is clashing with Yemeni security forces. In the north, there are frequent clashes between Houthis and Sunni tribes and the military.

Meanwhile, al-Qaeda has lost its bases in many regions to the Yemeni army; in response, al-Qaeda militants are trying to make the army cease its operations by attacking oil and natural gas pipelines. It takes a very long time to repair damaged pipelines since security cannot be completely established and of course this gives rise to serious problems with natural gas and oil supplies in Yemen.

If we ignore the leftist groups within the Southern Movement, we can reduce the security problem in Yemen to the political and armed opposition of Islamist groups. This problem is leading to severe issues in a country whose economy is already troubled. It is obvious that in order for these problems to be overcome, the groups involved in Yemeni politics need to act together. However, it also needs to be stated that the union of Muslims in Yemen, be they Zaidi or Sunni, is not a political necessity to put an end to the existing problems; unity is in any case a prerequisite for being a Muslim. Muslims must behave in accordance with Qur'anic moral values in national and international politics, as well as at all other moments of their lives. The moral values of the Qur'an primarily demand that the Islamic world be in alliance. In the event that Qur'anic moral values are followed in Yemen, the alliance to be established will be permanent and this will mean the country, with its strategic position, will be able to play the active role that is expected from it.

Islamic moral values require that Muslims always behave in a unifying manner and be brothers in faith in a spirit of solidarity and mutual aid. God commands Muslims not to quarrel among themselves (Surat al-Anfal, 46) and reveals that such behavior will only weaken them.

A Muslim who acts in the light of good conscience and reason, and who thinks of justice for the sake of God rather than his own interests, can never fail to be allied with other Muslims and mustn't be in a state of constant dispute with them. Explaining this to the Houthis in a sincere manner, and using the appropriate means, can represent a good start to a solution.

God forbids Muslim communities to be unjust or hostile toward one another. The Qur'an reveals that any such behavior must be stopped and that peace must be made between the quarrelling Muslim communities.

Of course there may be various regional, cultural and traditional differences of practice and understanding among all Muslim communities. There will even be different interpretations, views and

sects, such as in the case of Zaidi and Sunni sects; that is perfectly natural. What there must not be, however, is for one group to line up against another, like in Yemen, because of such differences, and cease all relations with them, regard them as foreign and even enemies as if they are people with whom there can be no agreement on the basis of common values. That is wholly unacceptable.

God warns Muslims against falling into such an error in the Qur'an, and points to the errors made by Christians and Jews on the subject as a deterrent. In reporting the errors made by Christians and Jews, we are also told that these communities fall out among themselves: Verse 4 of Surat al-Bayyina says that the People of the Book divided into sects even though a 'Clear Sign' came to them. Other verses point to poor moral values such as "injustice," "envy" and "rebellion against the Lord" as the reasons for such division.

It is the fact that people do not abide by the moral values commanded by God that lies behind religious divisions. These moral values are based on humility. People who abandon humility regard themselves and their own ideas as absolutely in the right, despise those who disagree with them and feel hostility toward them. Since they have no doubts at all about the correctness of their ideas, they never question themselves and thus cannot make any progress or improvement. The position of those who take great pride in their own ideas is described as follows in the Qur'an:

... But they disagreed and split up, dividing into sects, each party exulting in what it had. (Surat al-Mu'minun, 53)

What needs to happen is for different Muslim communities to be careful not to fall out over possible cultural and traditional differences, nor prepare the foundations of conflict by constantly emphasizing these differences, but to support an alliance based on living by the moral values of the Qur'an. Muslims must support one another in alliance and must behave in an understanding manner on those areas in which they disagree. In particular, leading thinkers and people of ideas in the Islamic world who realize the danger must engage in intense activities and encourage union and unity among Muslims. Solidarity built upon love, respect and compassion must be established, not only in Yemen, but in the entire Muslim world.

What lies at the heart of Islamic moral values is not dispute and division, but a concept based on unity of belief and shared values. The duty of all Yemenis, Zaidi or Sunni, is to adopt and implement that understanding.

Yemen Must Not Fall into the Trap of Identity Politics

September 14th 2014

Ideological policies predominated during the Cold War. At that time, the world was quite literally divided in two camps. The Western allies espoused a free market economy and private property, while the Eastern Bloc favored central planning and joint ownership. The struggle between the two ended with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and ultimately, the Soviet Union.

Numerous politicians and political scientists declared the collapse of the Soviet Union to be the definitive victory of capitalism. In their eyes, communism had now been absolutely vanquished and there was no longer any obstacle to the hegemony of democracy and capitalism. Yet many subsequent events showed that this prediction was untrue. Policies of identity rather than policies of ideologies became the source of tensions between countries.

Political identity is a term used to describe those policies intended to build a "pure and specific" identity in a country or region. Resistance to this policy implemented in a country as a whole can also be evaluated within the scope of political identity. The basic element in political identity may sometimes be based on ethnic differences and sometimes on religious or sectarian ones yet the best course of action is not to keep different identities separate, but to build a civilization in which they can all co-exist within a just order.

Events in Catalonia and the Basque region of Spain or in Northern Italy can also be analyzed under the heading of political identity.

A similar state of affairs applies in Yemen. Despite President Hadi's suggestions for the Houthis to end their protests, the Houthis' demand for five ministries in a new Cabinet to be established is yet another example of this desire. The demand for different identities to be equally represented in the administration is a legitimate one, although it is wrong to seek to make this a tool for conflict and seek to achieve legitimate democratic demands through undemocratic means.

People who engage in politics of identity prefer to live in a relatively weakened state as a community based on one single characteristic rather than joining forces under different identities. That difference in perspective means that policies of identity that have multiplied since the years of the Cold War have constantly created fresh spheres of conflict. For example, the Serbs in Bosnia, the Basques in Spain and the PKK in Turkey represent the main figures in the conflicts taking place.

It is in fact impossible for identity politics to fully achieve their aims, because human societies are not made up of indistinguishable individuals like the atoms in a table. The Southeast of Turkey is not entirely Kurdish: Arabs and Turks also constitute a major part of the population in the region and all of them lived together for centuries, and ethnic divisions disappeared. The same thing applies to Yemen. Many Sunni Arabs live in those areas where Houthis are in the majority. Even if people living in a region have the same ethnic or sectarian make-up, this does not mean that these differences have been eliminated. The great majority of people living in Southeast Turkey do not support the separatist Marxist Kurds, and those who do support them only tend to do so at gunpoint; likewise, it is also not possible to say that all the Zaidis in Yemen support the Houthi movement.

As we have seen, it is unrealistic to promise peace or tranquility to a region by concentrating on ethnic or sectarian characteristics. Conflicts engaged in for regional divisions simply and inevitably cause further conflicts once separation has taken place.

Countries frequently enter into conflict with separatist forces for that reason, and these conflicts can last many years. Seeking a solution in armed struggle alone leads to heavy material losses and casualties.

Political identities are not enough to bring justice, peace, security and wealth to the north of Yemen because no matter how much they consist of people with a similar identity, it is always possible for even further divisions to appear within those identities. Conflict is just as probable within the north of Yemen as it is in Yemen as a whole. Moreover, even though they are made up of the same ethnicities or sects, there are also several impoverished communities in conflict with one another.

People being of good conscience prevents them from discriminating on the basis of ethnic origins or beliefs and the only way to be of good conscience is faith. Only people who have faith can always act in the light of their conscience. There is only one solution to the injustice, conflict, terror, killing, poverty and oppression in Yemen – the moral values of the Qur'an.

Looking in general terms at the problems in Yemen and the rest of the world, all these things are clearly the result of feelings such as lovelessness, ruthlessness, enmity, hatred and self-interest, not to mention a lack of rationality. The way to totally eliminate these negative attitudes lies in understanding and forgiveness, and acting with good common-sense and reason. It also lies in establishing such pleasant virtues as love, affection, compassion and altruism firmly in the society. These features only belong to people who fully comply with the moral values of the Qur'an.

The Protests in Yemen Should Not Turn into A Mass Frenzy

September 21st 2014

Demonstrations and conflicts are going on in the streets of Yemen. What Yemen needs are peaceful resolutions to the disagreements, disputes and conflicts of interest more than ever. For the problems not to get any worse, it is very important to prevent social polarization and the involvement of society in these conflicts. At the moment, this should be the highest priority; it is far more important and urgent than the decrease in the oil prices or negotiating power sharing arrangements.

Mass demonstrations carry the risk of easily turning into armed conflicts by way of provocateurs blending into the crowds. The people of Yemen should never forget how the polarization in Tahrir and Adawiya Squares of Egypt dragged Egypt into a process of conflict and total destruction.

Mass demonstrations are defined as a legitimate right within the laws in all democracies. Thusly both in Turkey and in Western countries, people have the right to hold meetings and demonstration marches for certain causes without seeking prior permission as long as said protests are kept peaceful and not turn into occasions for armed conflict with the authorities. That being said, it is important to be wary of some basic points such as not violating the rights of others and not disrupting public security.

However if these stipulations are not observed and if these protests turn into occupations of certain districts and this occupation surpasses ordinary protests it becomes very easy for the uncontrollable elements to penetrate these demonstrations.

Provocateurs should be strictly avoided

As we've seen in many other examples throughout the course of history, due to their acts of violence, some militants allied to weak political powers can become quite influential in the future of a country in a manner that is disproportionate to their actual political power.

The methods they employ are always the same: Those who have very different goals than the demonstrators easily blend into the crowds by making use of the commotion. These people either instigate the crowds against security forces in a planned manner or instigate armed conflicts and use innocent civilians to shield themselves. Istanbul's Gezi Park protests, which were started by innocent young people as a way to express environmental concerns, were soon transformed into a theater of war by terror groups. Or like we've observed in Adawiya Square in Egypt, the crowds can easily be whipped up in a very short time by provocateurs skilled in leading mass movements.

Such tensions drag the state into a predicament; the Yemeni state is forced to choose between democracy and a show of force in order to assert its authority. If they do not allow protests, the government is intensely criticized on the grounds that there is no democracy in the country and that the rights of Yemen's Houthis are being violated.

In the meantime events grow and spread and just like what happened in Yemen, the problem ceases having anything to do with claiming a right and becomes a general security problem.

The government, wanting to put an end to the crisis in the country, resorts to military methods. That is because these protests become more-or-less permanent as they spread over time, just like we're seeing right now and the ultimately disrupt the peace and stability of the country. For that reason, various security problems appear and that drags the country into a situation wherein neither the normal day-to-day activities of society nor commerce can be sustained: For example, because of conflicts near the Sana'a airport, international flights to Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, have been cancelled temporarily.

Well then, what should the states facing such angry crowds as in Yemen do and what kinds of precautions should be taken?

Everyone suffers in commotion

The Houthis especially should re-evaluate their idea of struggling for their rights from a different aspect. Once the wrongfulness of the mindset that states "there is no way out other than armed conflict" is recognized, they can easily see that there are much better, more influential and easier ways to achieve their goals. Rebelling for their rights, paralyzing a country, and causing the death of innocent civilians is not democracy; on the contrary it means violating the rights of others.

One should never forget that reasonable and logical thinking can only be possible in a calm and stable environment, otherwise grave problems will occur. Panic and terror becomes widespread and many people become unable to think straight, and in such an environment, even simple matters that could easily be solved could escalate and serve as the spark that ignites a civil war.

What should be done to put an end to the problems of both the Sunnis and Houthis of Yemen is to unite Muslims under one roof at once and adopt a sincere, brotherly attitude. This is the most urgent requirement not only in Yemen, but throughout the entire Muslim world. God commands in a verse of the Qur'an as follows:

...If you do not act in this way (be friends and protectors of one another) there will be turmoil in the land and great corruption. (Surat al-Anfal, 73)

Neither the Yemeni government nor the Sunni people living there should externalize Houthis; on the contrary they should embrace them, refrain from humiliating them and make them feel that they respect and love Houthis as their brothers. The problems in Yemen cannot be solved by simply ignoring the existence of the Houthis; they can only be solved by recognizing their right to exist and by recognizing not only the lifestyles of Sunni people but that of everyone.

Being just, not threatening the sanctity of life and the property of others is a necessity of good morality that all Muslims, be they Sunnis or Shias, should possess.

If people among the Houthis and state officials possessing these beautiful moral values undertake their responsibilities, it would be possible to prevent the protests in Yemen from turning into a mass frenzy or worse, plunging the country into an outright civil war.

Mindsets Need To Change for A Permanent Peace in Yemen

September 30th 2014

The conflict of the last few weeks in Yemen seems to have stopped now that the Houthis have reached an agreement with the administration. That agreement contains articles referring to 'the establishment of a new government composed of technocrats, President Hadi bestowing the role of Prime Minister on someone who is not a member of any political party, lowering the price hikes on petrol products, one deputy each from the Southern Movement and the Houthis being appointed to the presidency, and the protest tents erected by the Houthis in the capital, Sana'a, being taken down.'

With this treaty, the long-lasting conflict is expected to come to an end, and it is hoped that Yemen will again enjoy stability. However, it seems that it will not be easy under the current conditions. According to information in the foreign press, foreign non-Yemeni elements have played a major role in both the conflict and in the agreement just reached.

Besides the statements in news reports that maintain that Saudi Arabia and Iran are actually fighting a proxy war in Yemen, and that the Houthis' justified demand for their rights is leading to fighting, there are also claims to the effect that what is really happening is, in fact, a fully-fledged sectarian war. If these claims are true, then it would seem difficult for the agreement reached with the Houthis to solve all the problems at once. As is well-known, it is not easy to put an end to a conflict of foreign origin in any country. What happened in Bosnia, although that was a struggle between Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Catholics, in contrast to Yemen, is the greatest indicator of this. The fighting occurred in Bosnia, but those who backed it were outside Bosnia, in Serbia and Croatia. The conflict came to an end with the Dayton Agreement, but Bosnia is still wracked by troubles that emerged because of that agreement.

First and foremost, we must not forget that solutions deriving from political agreements function from the top down. In other words, the agreement regulates power sharing and the use of resources within the state. In short, political agreements organize the state, but they cannot affect people's minds.

The basis of the fighting in Yemen is the radical and fundamentalist belief that incites division between Shiite and Sunni. The fact that 'Muslims are brothers' has been almost entirely abandoned on various pretexts that have nothing to do with religion, and the idea that other sects are mortal enemies has been encouraged. What Yemen and the entire Islamic world need is for that distorted mentality to be done away with. The fact that an agreement has been signed is without doubt grounds for rejoicing if it is instrumental in ending the bloodshed. However, different steps need to be taken if this agreement is to be made reality and if Yemen is to attain security and, most importantly, a lasting peace.

During these steps, it needs to be made clear that Shiites and Sunnis share the same book, prophets and faith, and that in the Qur'an, God tells Muslims to protect each other, not fight with one another. The superstitious conception of the faith that has infiltrated both Shiite and Sunni beliefs has

spread the idea that these two Muslim communities are hostile to one another. That is the main reason why Muslims are killing one another in Syria and Iraq.

Only education can prevent this mentality based on superstition from spreading savagery, enmity and lovelessness across the entire Islamic world and turning people away from the true faith en masse. This religion of superstitions is the result of a false system of education. Many people exposed to this system, Shiite or Sunni, are unaware that they are doing wrong. The damage done by this false education can only be healed through correct education. So instead of settling with only political agreements in Yemen, there also needs to be further action in education right away.

Moderate and peaceable leaders, plus representatives of the Houthis and Sunnis, must seek ways of ridding communities of that false education at meetings among themselves. They must set about educating people with books and broadcasts and seminars setting out the correct concept of religion. For example, they must set out, with verses from the Qur'an, how killing and hatred are unlawful in the faith. The Yemeni people must be given detailed information about the weaknesses and illogicalities of the system of superstitions.

If a lasting peace is desired in Yemen, the way to achieve this is through setting out the correct conception of the faith and eliminating the false one. Every Zaidi and Sunni who advocates a moderate concept of religion has major responsibilities in that regard.

Civil society organizations in Yemen can come together to encourage the money spent on arms to be spent on such an educational mobilization instead. They can use the media organizations at their disposal for that purpose. It must not be forgotten that it is easier to grasp and spread what is right and true; therefore, instead of abandoning communities to fanaticism and enmity originating solely from ignorance, the best thing to do is to eliminate that ignorance. It will then only be short time for weapons and war in Yemen to lose all meaning.

Muslims must at once abandon their sectarian divisions and be united in the manner commanded by God. In the Qur'an, God commands Muslims to act as one, as a single community:

Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate. Remember God's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way God makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surah Al 'Imran, 103)

What Can Be Done To Ensure Stability in Yemen?

November 4th 2014

Yemen, which has failed to establish a functioning state, has for years been seeking stability. The peace agreement with the Houthis following fighting that literally turned the capital, Sana'a, into a battleground was not enough to achieve stability. Yet, it has been a very important step towards stability when the political parties and movements endorsed the President of Yemen Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi and New Yemen Prime Minister, Khaled Bahah who was assigned with forming a government to establish a technocratic cabinet and declared they would not object to the activities of the government.

Although external forces such as Iran and Saudi Arabia are frequently mentioned as being behind the problems in Yemen, the real issue stems from serious flaws in the structure of Yemeni society. Therefore, even if the sides do agree on a candidate for prime minister, peace in the country will only be short-lived as long as permanent solutions to problems are not found.

Yemeni society is rich and complex, consisting of different sects with distinct traditions and cultures. Sectarian differences and a tribal-based order give rise to differing values in the country. These values generally obviate the minimum conditions for public order being attained.

In order for the state in Yemen to be more effective and provide more efficient services, it inevitably needs to be restructured. In the meantime, political authority will determine the main principles and aims on that subject. However, in order for that to happen, the tribes, Houthis and Sunnis, need to demonstrate a common will. The aim here should not be debates on who will be prime minister or whom this or that ministry will be given to, but should focus on the deep-rooted change necessary to bring stability to Yemen.

Indeed, the sides must abandon insisting on 'my priorities being implemented' and must instead agree on common denominators. It must not be forgotten that Yemen is a ship with everyone on board, and that if it sinks, everyone will suffer. The situation in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Egypt is plain for all to see, and Yemen must be careful to avoid making the same mistakes.

So, how can trust be established in the Yemeni people to their own state as to prevent Yemen becoming another Syria?

The first and foremost step needed for public officials in Yemen to create a common perspective in society is to determine basic principles. The principles in question must be advanced democracy, Islam and a Yemeni identity.

These principles must be explicitly set out by the state, and a more contemporary content must be added to the traditional perspective prevailing in society. The state must explain comprehensively in detail that all ethnic identities and political opinions can be maintained on the basis of democracy, and that democracy is indeed a part of Islam. For example, a Sunni must be told that Islam requires him to be friends with a Zaidi rather than his enemy with substantial evidence.

Be they Sunni or Zaidi, Muslims are brothers, and that brotherhood requires them to happily make sacrifices for and assist one another. For that reason, believers must have no qualms about helping other Muslims when they encounter difficulties on the path of God.

Every Muslim in fact wishes to help his brothers and to support those in need. This is a responsibility incumbent on all Muslims, Sunni or Zaidi. God reveals in the Qur'an that terrible strife and corruption will result when believers fail to help one another. God described believers as one another's guardians due to the mutual solidarity between them. All Muslims will encounter difficulties of various kinds; however, the devotion and mutual aid between Muslims enable them to overcome these difficulties en masse.

God speaks in the Qur'an of Muslims assisting one another in the same way that deniers are united among themselves. Muslims falling out with one another and the friendship between them being compromised, at a time when deniers assist one another even though they do not believe they will be rewarded in Paradise, of course represents a source of great corruption. This subject is especially raised in the Qur'an:

Those who are unbelievers are the friends and protectors of one another. If you do not act in this way there will be turmoil in the land and great corruption. Those who believe and have emigrated and struggled in the Way of God and those who have given refuge and help, they are the true believers. They will have forgiveness and generous provision." (Surat al-Anfal, 73-74)

If a bond can be established between Houthis and Sunnis in Yemen, as the moral values of the Qur'an require, 'impartiality' will become the most basic principle within the state. State impartiality in the face of individuals, despite all their differences, will make every Yemeni truly 'equal before the law' and will enable them to access public services on an equitable basis.

The objectives of the restructuring to be performed for the sake of new stability and order in the Yemeni state may include:

1) The concept of citizenship must be redefined over and above political, sectarian or tribal identities, and it must be ensured that all Yemenis sign up to this.

2) Social integrity in Yemen must be maintained and strengthened. It must therefore be emphasized that Islam opposes division and is a unifying factor.

3) Balance between citizens must be observed in the provision of public services. State sanctions or incentives on the basis of sect or tribe must be avoided.

4) Citizens' awareness on the subjects of public services and public authority must be restructured. Yemenis who enjoy greater public services will support the state more and avoid anything that might harm that state.

These four priorities will represent the basis of the establishment of public confidence. A state that instills trust in its own citizens will be able to maintain order in the streets and to provide uninterrupted public services.

Will the New Government in Yemen Bring Stability?

December 1st 2014

Conflicts have been ongoing without slowing down in Yemen with acts of violence intensifying in the country. The Houthis' advance towards Sana'a, Ibb, al-Hudaydah and Al-Bayda increased the protests of some groups; the government has failed to disperse demonstrators and has signed a "Peace and National Partnership Agreement" with the leaders of the uprising and the Houthis. With this agreement a new political process has started in Yemen.

The President, Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, assigned the Chief of Staff, Ahmad Awad Bin Mubarak to form the new government. However Mubarak – who received a lot of reactions with this assignment – declined the post. The task of forming the new government was instead given to Khaled Mahafoudh Bahah by President Hadi and the new government was announced on November 7th of 2014.

40% of the members of the new government are from the states in the south of Yemen: 12% of them are women and 38% of them are from various political parties. The ministries in this new government, consisting of 36 ministers in total, have been apportioned between the political parties and groups. According to this apportioning, nine chairs have been given to the General People's Congress and its allies under the leadership of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh; nine chairs have been given to Joint Meeting Parties; six chairs to the Southern Peace Movement and six chairs have been given to the Ansar Allah group of the Houthis. However not even a day after the establishment of this new cabinet, tensions have been exacerbated. While the General People's Congress announced that they would boycott the new government, Houthis declared that they do not recognize the government and made a call for a new government. Before starting to discuss the reasons behind this, it would be beneficial to briefly remember the conflicts going on in the country over the last few years;

The Yemeni Uprisings of 2011 in which the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh had to resign; al-Qaeda attacks; conflicts between Houthis, Sunni tribes and the army in the North, and conflicts between the separatist Southern Movement and security forces in the South; the attack of al-Qaeda militants on petrol and natural gas pipelines and the problem of natural gas and petrol shortages that has arisen in the wake of these attacks and above all those the fact that the domestic issues of the country being manipulated by foreign forces have brought the domestic peace and social order of Yemen to the point of collapse. Undoubtedly just like material and spiritual problems, oppression and violent treatment and an environment bereft of love, compassion and friendship would lead to various illnesses in people, states too get sick due to these same reasons and collapse. Even though these states that have lost their health continue to exist like ghosts on the world map, those states are "unsuccessful" or "failed" states according to international recognition. While the states that fail to put an end to the civil commotion going on in their lands are accepted as "unsuccessful states", the states that are unable to control their external borders and become subjects to foreign interventions are described as "failed states". In this respect, the profile of Yemen in the recent years fits the definitions of both "unsuccessful" and "failed" states. While it was thought that a new government formed in the

wake of such a difficult process would be a hope for the future of the country, the government's ability to provide and sustain stability in the country has already become debatable. Under these conditions, what should be the tasks of the new government?

It is apparent that deep-rooted problems are awaiting the new cabinet in Yemen with its complex social structure. There are sectarian differences and a deep-seated order based on tribes in the country. People from different walks of life are complaining about not having their freedoms; some of those people are in search of freedom for their sect or tribe and some are in search of freedom for their political views. However none of those walks of life assert the freedoms of "others". In this respect, redefining sectarian and tribal identities with the hand of the state, strengthening a sense of social integrity, putting forth an attitude strictly against all sorts of segregation and strictly avoiding all sorts of special punishments or special favoritism towards any sect or tribe should be among the priorities of the state. It should be made possible for Houthis, Sunnis, Zaidis and all other groups with different views to put forth a shared will together and the problems within the fabric of society should urgently be solved, otherwise it would not be possible to bring lasting solutions to the problems of the country. The state should urgently find a solution for these people who live on the same lands, speak the same language and most importantly have the same faith. To do that, it should be made possible for a spirit of love, brotherhood, friendship, unity and solidarity to replace the feelings of hatred and animosity in the society.

It is beyond doubt that Yemen is in need of reconstruction and this reconstruction can only be made possible with love. The domestic turbulence cannot be solved unless everyone embraces each other with love and holds on to each other remembering that they are brothers. That is why the most important task for the new government is to put forth a serious effort for compassion, love and brotherhood to prevail in Yemeni society.

Yemen Doesn't Deserve To Be A Failed Country

December 7th 2014

Countries resemble organisms, and they can fall ill from time to time. Today there are countries in which legal and social order have partially or completely collapsed due to civil wars, poverty, natural disasters and epidemics. Although these countries lost their health, they continue to be present on the world map. In the international relations, such countries are called 'failed or collapsed countries'.

One of the most prominent qualities of failed states is the existence of civil wars. And the most distinctive feature of collapsed states is that they cannot control their borders, unlike strong countries, and they become vulnerable to the intervention of other countries. Another sign of failure is the increase in the rate of crimes, and the failure to ensure the safety and security of the citizens. Failed states offer economic opportunities that are accessible only by a very few and as the administrators and their close circles swiftly get richer, the rest of the nation lives in poverty.

The recent developments in Yemen match the description of a collapsed state.

The Houthi riots, the acts of al-Qaeda, the intervention by Saudi Arabia, USA and Iran in Yemen and the separatist Southern Movement asking for help from Russia all prove that there is a serious lack of authority in the country. The recent bomb attack targeting the Iranian Ambassador in Sana'a, Hassan Sayed Nam, is also a clear indication that there are some who wish for the continuance of the negative atmosphere in the country. In early November 2014, the attendees of Friday prayers in Hormaksar, Aden urged for 'independence screams' to save the country from its political dilemma. And the supporters of the Southern Movement, which doesn't accept the march of the Ansar Allah Movement in the north (Houthis), urged independence for 'Aden'.

This unrest caused important security problems. Considering that there are 60 million weapons owned by the civilians in Yemen, against a population of only 25 million people, the reason behind the frequency of incidents of violence and conflict becomes clearer.

Armed groups raid military bases, arm their supporters and sell some of the weapons they seize. For this reason, there are almost two weapons per person in the country. Guns are so easily accessible that the weapons trade is now almost as prevalent as khat (a narcotic herb) trade.

All these developments drag Yemen into a downward spiral of economic failure and instability. The economic problems Yemen has been suffering since 2011 make the people poorer who already had a very low purchasing power. Due to the long-running negative atmosphere in the country, food prices go up as the markets, groceries and supermarkets suffer from a lack of demand.

The predictions that political instability will continue and the fact that inflation went up to two-digit figures for the first time this year add to the pessimistic outlook. The purchasing power per capita in Yemen is roughly \$4 (four US dollars) and although this is significantly lower compared to the international figures, it has the danger of falling further still. It is because there is great price pressure on basic food items and the foreign investments stopped. As the population continues to rise, the rate of unemployment increases incessantly.

All these are among the challenges that the new Cabinet led by Bahhah is facing. Clearly, great efforts are required to solve these problems and it is crucial that Yemen focuses on works to rebuild the weakened authority of the state.

The way to establish that authority is for everyone to believe in democracy and to respect one another's rights and those people elected to office. Once unity is established with the opposition with the country's interests being observed, when a conception of government is developed that includes and embraces people from all sections of society, the process of resolving the problems in the country will begin.

Peace and order in Yemen can be established only through implementing the demands of democracy and through everyone living in Yemen, be they Sunni or Zaidi, respecting and trusting the state and all its institutions.

Of course, when the people build a society in compliance with Qur'anic morals, peace will come automatically. In such an environment, people will stay away from all sorts of anarchy and terrorism and act as one in the interests of the country, even if their opinions differ.

What needs to be done in Yemen is to avoid any course of action that might lead to turmoil. In the Qur'an, God commands people to refrain from causing problems:

... Eat and drink what God has provided and do not act wrongfully in the land, spreading corruption. (Surat al-Baqara, 60)

The Problems of Yemen Can Be Solved When A Strong National Security Is Built

December 14th 2014

Contrary to expectations, the question of security became even more important when the Cold War ended. During those days, countries had been drawing closer to one of the camps led by the USA or the Soviet Union, guaranteeing their political, territorial integrity and security in the process. As the bipolar world fell apart, countries' national integrity also began falling apart. Their dissolution sometimes came in the form of ethnic or nationalist differences and sometimes with religious factors.

That's exactly what happened in Yemen. As in Libya, Egypt, Iraq and Syria, the number one problem requiring a solution is national security.

National security is traditionally described as a state defending its territorial integrity against attacks and threats. Bearing in mind that Yemen is facing threats from within and without, the country needs to produce security policies to ensure its territorial integrity and develop a security strategy involving how those policies can be implemented. National security must be one of Yemen's most basic policies: Other policies concerning social justice, the economy or education must be produced in line with national security.

The new cabinet under Khaled Bahhah must first accurately identify existing risks and threats in order to ensure national security. These risks and threats must be set out in national security documents jointly produced by the government and official security units.

There are three dimensions to the national security that the government needs to focus on; military, political and economic security.

Yemen should reconstruct its army to ensure that the country can be protected against an external threat. To this end, the weapons technology and their capacity should be improved, the security personnel should be educated about developing risks and the army should be fully ready to defend the country should there be an attack. These efforts are only a few of the elements that will ensure military security.

Needless to say, putting into practice a national security document depends on sufficient funds and time. For this reason, the most important complementary factor for Yemen's national security will be its economic security. If an adequate economic structure can be built in Yemen, the dependence of the state on external sources will decline and the international obstacles preventing the nation from developing policies to ensure its own security will be minimized. Supported by a strong economy, Yemen will be able to reinforce its military capacity and ensure that it is only minimally affected by possible financial shocks and therefore avoid economically-related political conflicts.

In order to build financial and national security in Yemen, political safety must be secured before everything else and political security can be guaranteed only when the state is strong in the political arena. For this a stable governmental structure and a political regime that represents all the citizens are

required. A prime minister or a minister that fears being dismissed at any moment will not be able to develop and apply long-term security plans. For this reason, it is of paramount importance that the entire Yemeni nation respects their state.

One important point that the Yemeni leaders should bear in mind is that the real driving force behind the needed loyalty of the Yemenis towards their state will be the morality prevalent in their society.

If a society becomes dominated by a mindset focused only on getting rich at all costs, if a rebellious and aggressive nature is praised and if individuals abandon values such as respect and altruism, the people cannot be expected to be loyal to their state. Loyalty to the state can develop only on the basis of a certain set of moral values. If that morality disappears and degeneration becomes prevalent in a society, loyalty to the state will be irreparably eroded.

Religious beliefs are the basis of the morality and qualities mentioned above. Indeed, what happened during the Cold War made it clear that there was no possibility for the continuance of faithless nations. For this reason, a national security policy to be built for Yemen should definitely include religious and moral elements. The three main threats to the security of Yemen can be summarized as sectarian divisions (Sunnis and Houthis), a radical interpretation of Islam (al-Qaeda) and a separatist movement championed by the socialists. The security policies to be developed for these three threats should include not only political and military measures but also a long-term education program. This program should not be restricted to the schools alone, and should be made available through radios, television and newspapers and must raise awareness of the following basic facts:

- 1) Muslims should be united according to Islam.
- 2) It is illegal according to Islam for Muslims to fight Muslims.
- 3) It is illegal according to Islam to try to damage or seize the property of others just because they hold other beliefs, or to make an attempt on their lives for that matter.
- 4) The existence of God is a clear fact, also supported by scientific evidence.
- 5) Islam encourages science and art, and attaches the utmost value to women.
- 6) The materialist views have no scientific basis whatsoever.

As has been shown historically, peace and stability in a society can be ensured only when democracy is lived to the fullest extent and when individuals from all walks of life respect and trust their state. A Yemeni society made of individuals that live by the principles of the Qur'an will be in an atmosphere of the utmost peace and security.

Military Operations Do Not Always Produce A Solution

December 21st 2014

American soldiers always win in American films. The most complex operations take place, the victory is won and the hostages are freed. American superiority is always symbolized. But is that how it is in the real world? If you look at history you will see that the facts do not always match what the films say. The operation known as Operation Eagle Claw is one example of this. The operation staged by the U.S. military in April 1980 to free 52 U.S. citizens being held hostage in the U.S. Embassy in Iran ended in a debacle due to a sudden sandstorm. An accident during refueling en route to the USS Nimitz, the center of the operation, led to the destruction of a C-130 Hercules plane and a U.S. helicopter. The U.S. Army lost eight servicemen and a transport aircraft, and had to withdraw from the region without carrying out the operation.

Another instance took place in Somalia. An operation in 1994 under the command of Gen. William F. Garrison ended in a fiasco and the deaths of 24 Pakistani and 19 U.S. troops in fighting in Mogadishu. The U.N. peacekeeping force and U.S. troops withdrew from the region on March 3rd, 1995, in the wake of increasing losses.

Military history is full of such failed rescue operations, even if they are not always as notorious as these two. One such incident took place in mid-December in the village of Dafaar in the Yemeni province of Shabwa. A rescue operation by U.S. special forces ended in two hostages, the 33-year-old American photojournalist Luke Somers and South African teacher Pierre Korkie, being shot to death by militants. A local al-Qaeda commander, various militants, a woman and a 10-year-old child also lost their lives.

U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel confirmed that this had happened during a hostage rescue operation. Somers and Korkie had been held hostage in Yemen for more than a year.

Security weaknesses in Yemen mean that terror organizations such as al-Qaeda are easily able to carry out operations. In the face of such actions in Yemen, as in many other places in the world, the U.S. resorts to armed intervention. Operations up until the deaths of Somers and Korkie were generally conducted by the use of U.S. drones; the U.S. had been conducting operations with drones in Yemen since 2002. Yet many of these operations ended in failure, with the deaths of many civilians. Most recently, 13 civilians died and 20 people were injured in an aerial attack on al-Qaeda targets in the Yemeni town of Rada.

In the wake of this, the Yemeni Parliament recently ratified a bill banning the use of U.S. drones in operations in the country against al-Qaeda. Under the new law, American drones are banned from playing an active role alongside the Yemeni Army in operations against al-Qaeda, and the government is obliged to put this decision into practice. The significance of that decision was that it represented the first condemnation of the U.S. by official Yemeni institutions.

So what should be done now as Yemeni forces are unable to stop the continuing terrorist activities in the country and external military interventions are leading to the deaths of innocent people?

This column has already described how all fanatical organizations, be they grounded in a political ideology or in religion, seek to impose their philosophies through the use of violence. An intellectual struggle must be waged against terror organizations that use violence in the name of Islam. It has now been proven by experience that military means do not produce results. Therefore, what needs to be done is the following:

The distortions in the thinking of members of Sunni groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIL, or of groups of Shiite origin in Yemen, such as Ansar al-Sharia, need to be powerfully stated. All leaders of opinion, and particularly people in the most senior positions in the Yemeni state, must over and over again state that, "In the Qur'an, it is explicitly stated that Muslims must invite people to the moral values of Islam simply with gentle words, not using force and compulsion." These people can be summoned to the true path by telling them of the freedom of belief in Islamic moral values.

All Muslims in all countries, Shiite or Sunni, must be told that violence is no way to seek their rights and that it is a flagrant violation of Islamic moral values. Since Islamic moral values cannot be espoused through acts of terror, and such acts will simply add to the numbers of enemies of Islam, people need to be told that they will invariably inflict even worse harm on Muslims.

Classes aimed at undermining the intellectual infrastructure of terror organizations need to be provided for students in schools; books and articles must be studied, and conferences and academic seminars must be held. That is the only way terrorism can be eradicated from the world. This method can dry up the swamp in which terror breeds.

Political Instability in Yemen Is Having A Damaging Effect on Children

December 28th 2014

When a country descends into political instability, various social groups will be affected. These may sometimes consist of businesspeople, sometimes of police and the military and sometimes of people of different beliefs. These groups express raising dissatisfaction as the effects of the instability intensify. The media generally act as a mouthpiece for these groups' complaints, or else people themselves take to the streets in protest.

There is another voiceless group at least as numerous as business people or workers. These people may suffer worst of all, but their voices are heard least at times of crisis. These people are children, a country's future. Children are not fed and cannot wash properly in times of crisis, and even their accommodation is limited.

If instability goes from bad to worse and has begun impacting on both the economy and security, the first to suffer is the education system. Interruptions to educational services make it impossible to raise a healthy new generation that will make a positive contribution to the country. Yemen is now on the brink of such a situation. The education system, which suffered numerous problems in the past, is now facing increasingly profound difficulties because of the increasing political instability in the country.

A look at the Human Development Index is enough to show the impact of the crisis in Yemen. The HDI measures life expectancy, literacy levels, education levels and living standards.

Development indicators for countries have been presented in annual Development Reports by the United Nations Development Programme since 1993. One of the three criteria used in establishing the index is education. Educational criteria consist of literacy levels and percentages of primary and high school and university registrations. Yemen stands 160th out of 186 countries, with a score of 0.45 out of a potential maximum score of 1 (2013 estimate).

Former education problems certainly have a major impact on such a low score. Levels on such matters as literacy in the country, the number of girls going to school, school building and internet access are way below global averages. Yemen emerges as one of the countries with the most serious education problems in the world.

This negative picture is made even worse by the security void since the revolution in Yemen in 2011. Lack of material means and security problems, interrupted transportation and the inability to provide adequate classes in schools mean that education is disrupted in many areas. Political uncertainty means that it is almost impossible to make good on earlier "promises of help" in the education system.

Since education cannot be provided in schools, classes for primary school children in many villages are provided by villagers and volunteer teachers sitting under trees. One example is the

village of al-Husha, affiliated to Al 'Udayn District 120 kilometers from the Ibb Governorate to the south of the capital, Sana'a. The state cannot provide a school for the village, and charities and philanthropists are unable to get aid there because of the general situation in the country.

Similar open-air schools to that in the village of al-Husha generally consist of a wall to serve as a blackboard and flat stones as notebooks. Classes consist of social topics, mathematics and basic Arabic grammar and are provided by dedicated volunteers at great personal sacrifice.

Villagers use all their means to ensure the continuity of such classes given under highly primitive conditions. Some strive to provide basic equipment such as chalk, while others bring water from wells a long way away on the backs of donkeys for the students to wash with. Similar conditions can be seen in many villages affected by spiraling violence and instability.

In places where there is unending conflict, people fear for their lives and are obviously not going to send their children to schools, and teachers will also never go to them. Domestic peace is essential for a prosperous state that can look with confidence to the future of Yemen.

The establishment of domestic peace will improve the quality of education, thus giving rise to high-quality people. A well-educated Yemeni will know how destructive sectarian conflicts are and will stand up to separatism. Such a Yemeni will read the Qur'an and learn the religion chosen for mankind by God, not the fundamentalist way of thinking that makes the world impossible to live in. That Yemeni will be taught that love of country is more important than love of tribe and will never join in the constant intertribal fighting.

Students who sit and study under a proper school roof and who learn about such virtues as compassion, love, respect, forgiveness and rationality will represent the greatest builders of the future of Yemen.

Spirit of Unity A Must For Yemen's Political Transition

February 1st 2015

The recent history of Yemen, one of the oldest civilizations in the world and described as "Happy Arabia" in ancient times, is filled with wars, coups and political instability. Internal disorder in the country is continuing relentlessly.

Yemen is one of the main countries to experience the flames of the revolt that started with the Arab Spring. Now, it is once again on the world agenda due to political conflicts and acts of violence.

Houthis are once again at the core of these incidents. The Shia'a Houthis claim they are ignored by the government and are facing discrimination. What they aim to achieve with their actions is to obtain more rights and autonomy and to revitalize the Zaidi consciousness against the current administration, which they claim is harming the traditions of the Zaidi sect they belong to; that is why they have been fighting the military since 2004 and forced the government and President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi to resign through their recent actions.

Some time ago, the leader of the Houthis, Abdel-Malek Houthi, asked President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi to establish a new government that would represent different factions in a just power-sharing agreement. Immediately afterwards thousands of Houthi supporters staged a massive sit-in right in front of the government offices. Tensions escalated and fierce fighting broke out. The Houthis then stormed the government buildings. Finally, the Houthis that had seized the presidential palace and the capital first forced the government, and later on President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, to resign. Tens of thousands of people then took to the streets from all parts of the country.

The ousting of the legitimate prime minister and president of a country by force will obviously threaten and impair the unity and integrity of that nation. What is more, such circumstances will lead to considerable loss of stability and security and in that sense to the loss of the gains made up to that point. These incidents in Yemen, which is in the process of a political transition, may have damaging implications for the country's future and may lead to sectarian conflicts or widen the scope of terror organizations. Therefore, in order to heal the wounds and reinstitute stability in the country as quickly as possible, all parties must behave as peacefully, prudently, calmly and conciliatory as possible.

All the relevant parties should implement the requirements of the Gulf Cooperation Council, National Dialogue Conference and Peace and National Partnership of September 21, 2014, allow the ratification of a new constitution, establish independent institutions, and bring about the free mechanisms that can dispense justice. Yemen has many issues to resolve, including riots in the north, separatist groups in the south, lack of capacity in local administrations, widespread poverty and malnutrition, an increasingly deteriorating economy, worsening unemployment, and the fragmented structure of the military. These problems can only be overcome when the entire nation joins hands, sets aside its differences and overcomes the disunity in the country.

In order for Yemen to embrace tranquility, prosperity, peace and stability, there first needs to be an atmosphere of love based on mutual compassion, friendship and brotherhood. Only then can the nation be settled on strong foundations of justice, freedom and democracy.

It must not be forgotten that Yemen has been close to collapse for a long time. The revolts in 2011 that led to the stepping down of the former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, attacks by al-Qaeda, conflicts between the Houthis, Sunni tribes and the military, as well as fighting between the separatist Southern Movement and the security forces, attacks by al-Qaeda militants on petroleum and natural gas pipelines, and the ensuing natural gas and fuel oil shortages, and in addition the running of the country being in the hands of external powers, have destroyed internal peace and social order in Yemen.

The only salvation for the nation is to preserve social integrity and to take certain self-sacrificing steps to build a spirit of unity and togetherness.

What Yemen Needs Is A Spirit of Union and Unity

February 10th 2015

Following a university graduate's working as a street trader burning himself to death because of unemployment and economic difficulties, street protests broke out in Tunisia and in no time spread to other Arab countries. This led to the fall of oppressive and authoritarian regimes, and the whole region entered a period of transition. Major conflicts broke out in some countries, while others made progress, albeit slow, on the road to democracy. Yemen is the country that has hung furthest behind in the process, now in its fifth year. Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled the country for 33 years, was overthrown, but there was not the slightest change in the severity of the domestic conflicts and instability in the country. The country, once one of peace and happiness, continues to struggle to survive in a state of poverty, division and fragmentation after the revolution just as it did before it.

Yemen occupies a special place in the Arab regions in several regards. Above all, the country is of enormous geostrategic importance. The country lies to the east of the Horn of Africa, which includes Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti, on one of the world's busiest trade routes, and of the Mandeb Strait. It represents a link between Africa and Asia. It also opens onto the Red Sea, which links the East to the West, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. The port of Aden lies on one of the world's busiest maritime routes.

Although Yemen possesses a number of strategic advantages, the region is a difficult one to bring under control because of its social structure. Separatist movements that emerged after the unification of North and South Yemen also being added to climate of turmoil caused by various tribal, ethnic and religious groupings brought the disorder in the country to a peak. The unification of North and South in 1990 had been expected to strengthen the country, but its political, social and economic problems actually worsened. A rapidly rising population, poverty, corruption, unemployment, inflation, the consumption of natural resources, the water problem, as well as sectarian, ideological and historical divisions, ethnic-separatist Houthi unrest, intertribal fighting and the increasing strength of al-Qaeda, which has been actively present in Yemen since the 1990s, all brought the country to the point of collapse. Social and ideological unrest since August 2014, domestic conflicts and uprisings aimed at removing the president once more led to Yemen appearing on the global agenda.

The absence of President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi and Prime Minister Khalid Mahfuz Bahhah, who left office with the Houthi uprising, has led to enormous political uncertainty in the country. Under the constitution, the speaker of the parliament should deputize for the president, a date for new elections should be set within 60 days and a new president should be elected within 90 days. However, Parliament has still not met after the resignations, and this is heightening the political uncertainty. The Houthis, depicted as responsible for the tension in the country as a whole and accused of carrying out a coup, recently said that they will declare a constitution that will shape the administration of the country, that a national assembly will be established instead of the parliament and that this assembly will select the head of the council of ministers. We hope that Yemen will be able to emerge from this situation, in which new political developments are taking place by the day

and which began with the removal of the elected president and prime minister, and that it will thus make permanent progress on the road to democracy.

The fact is that for hundreds of years the people of Yemen have suffered and lived in an unhappy and backward state due to problems stemming from hunger, poverty, sectarianism and tribalism and many other domestic and external difficulties. What the people of Yemen long for most of all is an end to the climate of tension and insecurity and the dawn of a period of stability. Everyone in Yemen, be they Shiites, Sunnis or Zaidis, or even non-believers, wants a more peaceful and tranquil life. The country's most urgent need is a conception of governance in which everyone benefits equally from democracy, in which human rights and individual rights and freedoms are respected, which is inclusive and which treats everyone with love and compassion. At this point, the people of Yemen also have major responsibilities, of course. The most pressing of these are to act as one to preserve the country's social integrity, to abandon the spirit of conflict so their country can achieve prosperity, peace and stability, and to collaborate in a spirit of friendship and brotherhood in the light of the national interest, rather than of ethnic, sectarian or individual ones.

Internal peace can only come when these conditions are met. Social peace and stability will develop much more easily once a spirit of union and unity has been established, and all the country's problems can then be resolved on the basis of compromise. We hope that Yemen will soon unite in love and brotherhood, that it will thus achieve the peace and security it deserves and that it will begin to take sound and determined steps in the transition to democracy.

Yemenis Must Be Friends, Not Enemies

February 22nd 2015

Strength and security are two of the criteria on which countries base their foreign policies. Almost all countries feel the need to be regarded as strong by their neighbors in order to ensure their own security.

Countries can wage war against their neighbors if they regard them as threats, or sometimes, instead of war, may seek to increase their strength through various alliances. Other methods of ensuring security without resorting to violence are economic sanctions and blockades. Yet another method, despite being forbidden under international law, is supporting armed elements within a neighboring country. All these methods are utterly ruthless and lead to death or suffering among innocent civilians.

Events in Yemen today may be interpreted as the result of these ruthless methods in the international system. Regional and global powers are making various calculations regarding Yemen, and that has condemned the country to many years of instability.

The internal dynamics stemming from the social and political structure of Yemen certainly play a role in what is going on. Factors such as divisions, alliances, civil war and, more recently, the weakening of the army, the failure to ensure security and a worsening economic situation have led to the current state of affairs in Yemen.

Countries rarely interfere directly in others as they used to. Such interventions are both costly and have no place in international law. Countries therefore look for other means to ensure their interests when they regard them in danger in neighboring countries. The preferred method under those circumstances is "to seek elements in a neighboring country that will act in the light of one's own interests."

Those elements may sometimes be a terror organization, or a minority group, and sometimes the country's army or a political party. These elements may be supported directly through arms or financial assistance, or else the support may be indirect. Indeed, some support is so professional that the group being supported imagines it is acting in the light of its own ideals, but may actually, albeit unawares, be fighting for the interests of another country.

One can often see such a picture in the Middle East: Although Hizbullah's activities against Israel in Lebanon are well known, the influence of Iran is clear. A similar state of affairs can be seen in Yemen, too.

Two main forces are jockeying for influence in Yemen. Behind one is the Shi'ite influence of Iran, and the other the Sunni influence of Saudi Arabia. The USA can also be added to the equation from time to time. Despite being the two main branches of Islam, there is a ruthless struggle between Shi'ism and Sunnism in the Middle East. This struggle, that began in Lebanon and worsened in Iraq, has now spread to Syria and is now manifesting itself in Yemen.

Although the Ansar Allah Movement, known as the Houthis, denies any links with Iran, many countries are in fact certain that they exist. Statements about Yemen from Iran, which no longer feels any need to conceal its relations with the Houthis, only serve to confirm these suspicions.

Iran considers the gains made by the Houthis in Yemen more as a victory for the Iranian Islamic Revolution than for a friendly group whose rights have been restricted. So what is the reason for Iran's seeking such a victory in Yemen? First and foremost, it is to annoy Saudi Arabia, which it regards as a threat and then to establish control over the Red Sea, one of the main arteries of global oil traffic.

Although the Houthis have been to some extent successful in taking over the Yemeni state, they appear to lack the strength to maintain the government. It is in fact almost impossible for them to do that in the face of a large Saudi backed Sunni opposition.

Saudi Arabia previously regarded Shi'ite popular movements in Bahrain as a threat to its own security and intervened directly in the country; there is now a strong possibility of a similar intervention in Yemen. However, this may lead to al-Qaeda, which is fighting the Houthis, attracting support from Sunni tribes on the grounds of a Shi'ite threat. Such a state of affairs could make the situation even more intractable for both Saudi Arabia and for the USA.

It is obvious that the Sunnis cannot achieve power without taking the Houthis into consideration. Even though the Houthis claim to be in control, it will be impossible to impose their authority everywhere in the country. Yemen's political situation resembles a parliament in which no party has the majority required to form a government. The groups are calculating how to establish their own administrations rather than the interests of the country. In the event that this struggle turns into a worsening conflict, the Sunnis and Shi'ites in Yemen will suffer similar harm to those in Syria. In the event that Saudi Arabia and Iran step up their security expenditures when oil revenues are falling, the resulting crisis could very well trigger a kind of Arab Spring in those countries. In that case, the situation in Yemen may end as little more than a Pyrrhic victory (*).

However, Almighty God commands believers to be united, to stand as one against denial, to regard and love one another as brothers, to be compassionate, forgiving and protective of one another and to avoid any division or fragmentation.

The believers are brothers, so make peace between your brothers and have fear of God so that hopefully you will gain mercy. (Surat al-Hujurat, 10)

* A Pyrrhic victory is one achieved at the cost of enormous losses, in which the winning side is too weakened to win another one, and even its future survival is in doubt.

There Is Still Hope for Peace and Democracy

February 15th 2015

Enormous political changes have been taking place in Yemen in recent years. The latest of these was the Houthi seizure of power. U.N. Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon referred to these latest developments by saying, "Yemen is collapsing before our eyes. We can't stand by and watch." Moon considers that Yemen is on the brink of civil war; Jamal Benomar, the U.N. Special Adviser on Yemen, also thinks that groups such as al-Qaeda will grow stronger if the political crisis in the country continues.

These concerns are certainly not unfounded. The departure of the ambassadors from the U.S.A., Great Britain, Italy and France in the wake of the Houthi coup d'état is another sign of this. The Houthis seized the vehicles of foreign diplomats departing the country. Vehicles belonging to the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a were seized by surrounding the embassy. This is not just a simple matter of the capture of some loot: It is a consequence of the Houthis' approach to the USA and European countries. The Houthis are known to have been unfriendly to the West for some time. Had U.S. diplomats not abandoned the country in a timely manner, there might well have been an embassy crisis in Sana'a similar to the one that occurred during the Iranian Revolution.

Houthis not only enjoy poor relations with the Western countries, but also with the Sunni world – even in Yemen, clashes between the two groups are common. Al-Islah, the Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qaeda in places such as Al Bayda' and Saudi-backed Sunni tribes all clash with the Houthis.

Despite having taken control of Sana'a, the Houthis face serious opposition in the country. If the sides attempt to dominate the country by waging war and sweeping away their enemies rather than the path of peace and reconciliation, then they will be adding another to the list of countries suffering disaster in the Middle East.

What Yemen now needs most of all is "reconciliation." The first step toward reconciliation can come about by impartial international institutions or national representatives assuming responsibility. In the same way that Russia and some EU countries acted as intermediaries in Ukraine, a special delegation of Iranian and Saudi representatives under the auspices of the U.N. can play a role in the restoration of peace and democracy in Yemen. The U.N. and its representatives in Yemen of course have a major responsibility here. One of the essential preconditions for reconciliation is the establishment of an international problem-solving delegation and for that delegation to be able to propose a series of options aimed at a solution that protect the interests of the different sides.

The plan for a solution must be based on fairness, not one-sided protection of interests; a solution must be found by dealing with the problems of the past as much as by planning for the future. The sides must therefore consider not just their own interests, but those of all Yemen and of all Yemenis. Another precondition is that once the bases of a solution have been hammered out, these should be set out in a legally binding document, to which all sides must remain faithful.

The delegation can prepare a road map to a solution by observing the present situation and circumstances. It is vitally important for the delegation to have both Iranian and Saudi representatives, because only in that way can allegations of a solution favoring one or other side in Yemen be avoided.

In addition to groups within the country, external factors are also important in the building of peace in Yemen such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. Another problem that needs to be resolved is these countries' looking at and using a particular group in Yemen as a proxy of their own interests. Otherwise it will be impossible to build peace in Yemen, even if groups inside it wish to do so.

The second step on the road to solution is for the sides to negotiate these proposals for a solution and to agree on their final form. A U.N. peacekeeping force must also serve to establish and maintain peace in Yemen while the plan is being implemented.

Building peace in Yemen will embody the fact that Shiites and Sunnis are not mortal enemies, but friends and brothers, and this, in turn, will give hope to the entire Islamic world. All the sides in Yemen must be aware of that responsibility and strive, not for corruption, but for all Muslims to live together in peace and tranquility.

**Do not corrupt the earth after it has been put right. Call on Him fearfully and eagerly.
God's mercy is close to the good-doers. (Surat al-A'raf, 56)**

The Struggle for Power Must Not Break Yemen Apart

March 1st 2015

The broad territory that stretches from Morocco to Iran has long been known as the "Arab World." Although that name gives the impression of a single geographical whole, events in recent years show the opposite; the Arab world is in conflict with itself and falling apart. So severe is that process that it is even ringing alarm bells in non-Arab Turkey and Iran.

The Arabian Peninsula and Gulf countries that until a year or two ago appeared unaffected by this process of break-up are now, in the wake of events in Yemen, seeking measures to prevent it from being their turn next. The fear of break-up is rapidly affecting, and even changing, countries' general policies.

Saudi Arabia, where King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has succeeded King Abdullah, has been sending out signs of changes in its policy toward Yemen. Until very recently, Saudi Arabia gave Egyptian President Sisi definitive backing against the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the Saudi regime that supported the 2013 coup is now keeping more of a distance from Sisi: One can begin to discern a Saudi policy that wishes to draw closer to Turkey and also lighten, albeit slightly, the harsh measures adopted against the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

There is no doubt that this change will also be reflected in the relations between al-Islah, regarded as the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. In this case, we will probably see a more powerful Sunni faction emerging against the Houthis.

Indeed, militants from the Houthi Ansar Allah movement, which foresaw this, made their opening gambit by besieging the house of Mohammed Kahtan, one of al-Islah's leaders. One may regard that move as a measure by the Houthis against the possibility of the opposition's strengthening by joining forces in Aden; that is because Kahtan was preparing to leave the city of Ibb for Aden. Another opposition figure prevented from leaving for Aden by Ansar Allah militants was Nasserite Unionist People's Organization secretary general Abdullah al-Noman.

Readers will recall that President Hadi succeeded in traveling to Aden while under house arrest in Sana'a and then withdrew his resignation. In the immediate wake of that, he held meetings with various political groups in Aden and with Abdul Latif Al Zayani, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council: All this is significant in terms of showing that Aden has become a center of opposition to the Houthis and it is confirmed by the fact that ambassadors from the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia have now begun working from Aden.

The Southern Movement, another opposition group in the country, is not standing idly by as the anti-Houthi Sunni faction in Yemen becomes stronger. The Southern Movement accuses Mansour Hadi of usurping the presidency and is holding protest meetings. The movement regards Aden as its own base and is unwilling to see it become a center for Hadi and the Sunni opposition. This attitude will obviously worsen tensions in Yemen. Indeed, al-Jazeera Television has reported that clashes have already taken place between armed groups affiliated to the Southern Movement and the Yemeni Army in the city of Lahij.

In these days when the different sides are breaking away from one another, Yemen is experiencing the calm before the storm. The storm may break at any moment when the sides conclude that they are strong enough. Once it has broken, we will be confronted by a Yemen in three parts; a Houthi region based in Sana'a, a Sunni region based in Aden and Southern Yemen around Al Mukalla or perhaps some other city.

Although Yemen is not yet officially divided into three parts administratively, it is mentally and politically already divided. If that division is made official, the three countries that emerge will be even poorer than Yemen is now. The Houthis, Sunnis and Southern Movement must therefore realize this at once. All the groups in Yemen must realize that the way to strength, as Almighty God says in the Qur'an, is not through division but through unity. It must not be forgotten that Muslims are brothers and that conflict, division and lovelessness are displeasing to God.

Obey God and His Messenger and do not quarrel among yourselves lest you lose heart and your momentum disappear. And be steadfast. God is with the steadfast. (Surat al-Anfal, 46)

Yemen Must Not Become A Trojan Horse on the Arabian Peninsula

March 22nd 2015

The Trojan Horse is a famous legend in Turkey. Legend has it that the Greeks and the Trojans fought for years on end, but that the fighting was inconclusive.

Finally, the Greeks retreated, leaving behind a large wooden horse before the walls of the city of Troy. The Trojans imagined they had won the war and dragged the wooden horse, which they regarded as a trophy of war, inside the city and began celebrating their victory. While the Trojans were busy celebrating, Greek warriors concealed inside the wooden horse emerged, opened the city gates to the rest of the Greek army and sacked the city.

Events in Yemen today are reminiscent of that legendary war in Anatolia many thousands of years ago. However, there is no wooden horse in Yemen, because efforts are being made to turn Yemen itself into one. The sides in Yemen are also unclear, unlike those in the legend of Troy; there, the two sides were the Greeks and the Trojans, while there are numerous sides in Yemen. There are those fighting directly and those acting as their guardians.

The sides directly in the war include the Houthis, forces loyal to President Hadi, the Southern Movement, the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaeda. There are also those behind them acting as their guardians, such as Iran on one side and Saudi Arabia on the other, the Gulf countries, the U.S. and even Europe. It is unclear which side will come out on top, but as the struggle turns into all-out war it is clearly Yemen that will lose.

Yemen has for a long time been quite poor and with a weak state. The damaging effect of the war is now making living conditions in the country even more difficult. The Houthis, using increases in fuel prices and maladministration as a pretext for rebellion, have caused worse damage than the price hikes and maladministration ever did as their objections have turned into a civil war. Looking for a solution to that damage, the Houthis received support from Iran.

That support became clear at a press conference given on March 1st by Saleh Ali al-Sammad, head of the Ansar Allah movement's political council, following a visit to Iran.

As well as its political difficulties, Yemen also has a serious energy problem and the already inadequate energy plants in the country are frequently sabotaged. That further increases the cost paid by the civilian population in that climate of conflict.

Iran's decision to supply fuel for a year and build a 165-megawatt power station running on gas and diesel oil and assume responsibility for the maintenance work on the current generating plant in the province of Marib and repair the Marib-Sana'a power transmission line represents one of the few positive developments in Yemen.

Iranian support is not limited to this: Sammad reported that the agreement reached with Iran also includes Iran sending a technical team to Yemen to investigate the feasibility of a project to build 1,200-megawatt power stations in the port city of Mocha attached to Taiz governorate, Aden and Hodeidah, as well as expanding the port of Hodeidah and improving collaboration between the

countries on the subject of maritime transportation and the provision of credits for purchases of machinery and goods.

In order for this support and investment to have a positive impact on Yemen, great care needs to be taken over two matters. The first is that the assistance and support program must not be restricted to the area under Houthi control. The other is that the investment and support must not be sabotaged by those opposed to the Houthis.

If these conditions can be met, that will make it easier to establish constructive dialogue between the sides and will, to some extent, improve matters for the Yemeni people, whose position is worsening. All the sides - who take every opportunity to claim they are acting in the name of Islam - must stop arming themselves and fighting one another at once.

Both the Houthis and the Sunnis, who regard them with hostility, must not forget that a conception based on a unity of belief and common values lies at the heart of Islamic values, rather than division and dispute. Muslims must support one another in alliance and be compassionate and understanding, even when they disagree.

All Muslims in Yemen should greet and talk to one another. They must be tolerant of one another. Sectarian or tribal disagreements must come to an end. And all Muslims must work together, in tolerance and humility, to draw closer to God and perform greater service for His faith. They must also not forget this commandment of God's:

Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate. Remember God's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the fire and He rescued you from it. In this way God makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surah Al 'Imran, 103)

Developments in Bahrain, Yemen and Other Islamic Countries Must Not Be Allowed To Turn into A Sectarian Conflict.

March 20th 2011

The events taking place one after the other in the Islamic world over the last few months are extraordinary developments that all Muslims must think about deeply. Muslims, for decades, have been oppressed by means of anti-democratic methods. Muslims living in hunger and poverty because of unjust income distribution and being prevented from living by their faith, have risen up against decades of continued repression and have become instrumental in regime changes in Tunisia and Egypt. One can view the lifting of pressure on Muslims and steps toward democratization as being reasons for rejoicing; however, they are not sufficient in bringing about the peace, security and well-being that we hope for. In order for liberty, peace and security to replace the oppression that has persisted for years in many Islamic countries, it is essential for people to follow the path revealed by God in the Qur'an and shown by our Prophet (pbuh).

Our Prophet (pbuh) foretold that events would take place one after the other.

Our Prophet (pbuh) warned the Ummah and prepared them for this important period by comprehensively describing the events in detail that will take place in the End Times. The Messenger of God (pbuh) spoke of every one of the events that will take place in this time and told Muslims what to do to overcome them.

He said that the waters of the Euphrates would be stopped, that blood would be shed at the Kaaba, that Iraq and Afghanistan would be invaded, and that there would be lunar and solar eclipses in the month of Ramadan. Our Prophet (pbuh) also informed his Ummah about the appearance of Halley's comet and the comet Lulin. He foretold that Muslims would be leaderless, that cruel rulers would inflict suffering on Muslims, and that the Islamic world would be taken captive. He spoke of the corruption that would start in one place as it ended in another, that there would be wars and slaughter, and that there would be a rise in earthquakes and natural disasters. Our Prophet (pbuh) stated that these events would happen one after the other. He stated that when these things began, the time of the coming of Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh), one of his descendants, would be close at hand. You can read more about the hadiths and the events taking place at www.endoftimes.net. He said that believers who realize that Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh) had come when they see these events beginning must seek that blessed individual out, strive to locate him under all conditions and come together under his spiritual leadership.

By God's leave, the hadiths of the End Times taking place one after the other as of Hijri 1400 prove undeniably that we are living in the age described by the Prophet (pbuh). What needs to be done, therefore, is to follow the path shown by our Prophet (pbuh) and make the finest preparations for Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh). In speaking of their desire for the tyrants to leave and putting an end to the oppression, Muslims must also express their demand to see Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh) and for the unification of the Islamic world. It is essential for Muslims who want Pharaohs and Nimrods to go to want to see Abrahams appear. Those who want an end to the cruelty of the way of the antichrist (dajjal) must also want the beauty of the way of the Mahdi (pbuh), which is love and affection, to rule. If Muslims are not united as God commands them to be in the Qur'an, if they ignore all the portents taking place as foretold by our Prophet (pbuh), and if they regard these things as political and social developments, then they cannot attain the success and joy they long for. It is the system of the Mahdi (pbuh) and the Islamic Union that will be instrumental in bringing Muslims happiness in these End Times.

Muslims must strengthen their spirit of unity and ally themselves around the truth.

As all these events take place, Muslims must not forget the important fact that all people who say "La'Ilaha'IlAllah Muhammadan Rasulullah" are brothers. At this time, when Muslims have no spiritual leader and rivers of their blood are therefore being shed, unity of brotherhood and the union of all Muslims are of the very greatest importance.

It is impossible for one Muslim to leave another in difficulty and in the face of oppression, no matter what their individual sect, ideas or group membership may be. Muslims must always remember our Prophet's (pbuh) words that ***"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should neither oppress him nor hand him over to an oppressor."*** (Sahih Bukhari, Book 85, Hadith 83)

A Muslim is always aware that he must want the best for his brothers in the faith. He must think of them as he thinks of himself. He must respond with patience, love and affection whenever a dispute arises. A Muslim must therefore desire liberty, ease, comfort, well-being, and security for all Muslims as well as for himself. Ideas such as "As long as we are all right" or "as long as we ourselves have freedom" are incompatible with Qur'anic moral values. The morality of the Qur'an insists that Muslims must desire and bring about a decent quality of life for all, no matter what their faith, religion or race may be. Muslims have an obligation of conscience to desire ease, security and peace for all Muslims who share the same Book, Prophet and God.

It is very important to bear these facts in mind when analyzing the events of recent days. Rulers, be they Shiite, Sunni, Jaffari or Wahhabi, must strive to ensure equal opportunities, peace and happiness for all Muslims. If Shiites cannot live at ease under a Sunni regime, or if Sunnis are not at peace under Shiite leadership, then this is a sign of flaws in the application of the moral values of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh). Everyone in an administration run by Islamic moral values is in position in order to serve, and has a responsibility to ensure that everyone is treated as a first class citizen. It is unacceptable to put down the legitimate demands of the people and to seek to block them by force. In particular, God will never approve of such oppression and force being directed against a specific group, sect or idea.

Therefore, our hope is for Muslims to live pleasant lives, be they Shiites, Sunnis, Wahhabis or Jaffaris, in all Islamic countries, particularly Yemen and Bahrain. One must also bear in mind and be aware of the fact that those wishing to disseminate discord among Muslims may also be making plans to set brother against brother. Events in Bahrain and Yemen must not be allowed to turn into conflicts

of brother against brother. The strategies of those who wish to set Muslims, who share the same love for God, His Book and His Prophet (pbuh), against one another must be thwarted.

Is This the Will of Yemenis or the Global Powers?

March 29th 2015

The coalition forces composed of air forces of ten nations under the leadership of Saudi Arabia have started the long expected operation against the Houthis Ansar Allah movement upon the call of Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi. With the beginning of the air operation known as "Decisive Storm", eyes have once more turned to Yemen.

This operation started with the air bombardment of the Yemeni capital Sana'a, under the control of the Houthis, during the night on March 26th. The air forces of Kuwait, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco have joined the operation to which Saudi Arabia participated with 100 jets. Egypt and Pakistan also gave support to the operation.

It has been reported that tens of civilians have lost their lives during the air operation to which the US also gave logistics and intelligence support. The images of people who have died, injured and those in extreme grief in the region are constantly being broadcasted in the media. In order to understand properly what is happening in Yemen, one needs to have a good grasp of the situation, not only of the country itself, but of the region in general.

The appearance and development of the Houthi movement in Yemen

Yemen, with a very strong and influential tribal system, is one of those Arabic societies in which tribal tides are strongest. Because of the weakness of the central government, tribes are in the driver seat in many regions. Houthis, the target of this operation, are one of those influential tribes.

Houthis are a branch of about 400 Zaidi Shia tribes that constitute 30% of the whole Yemeni population and have been educated by the Shia missionaries since the 80's. The Houthi movement was started in 1992 by Zaidi Shia university students backed by Iran and was organized under the name of "Young Muslims." After the US insurgency in Iraq in 2004, the movement enjoyed wide support in the Yemeni capital Sana'a with the rising anti U.S and anti Israel incentives.

Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, the leader of the movement who started an armed uprising in 2004, had been killed on September 10th 2004, along with 20 followers and was replaced by his son Abdul Malik al-Houthi who received military and religious education in Iran.

During this time, Ali Abdullah Saleh who has been the President of Yemen since 1990 was in office. Abdullah Saleh was regarded as an ally by the US. Despite the serious discomfort of the citizens, Saleh remained in the office with corruption, oppression and politic intrigues and enjoyed serious support of the US.

The Process Leading to the Operation

In the wake of the uprisings in Yemen, which were the reflections of the Arab Spring in 2011, Ali Abdullah Saleh resigned from the office after being given immunity. Vice President Mansour Hadi, supported by the Obama administration, succeeded him. In this way the pro-US regime had been protected in Yemen.

Iran backed the Houthi uprising that started in September 2014, it escalated when the Shia militia seized power in Sana'a. President Mansour Hadi, who was put under house arrest after this uprising, fled to Aden in the south of the country and declared that he resumed his post as the President. The UN Security Council did not recognize the Houthi government and declared that Mansour Hadi government is the official Yemeni government.

Just before the operation, Houthis besieged Aden after seizing the city of Lahij, 60 km to Aden and Aned, the greatest air base in the south of the country. That was the last straw that broke the camel's back.

It is not possible to say that Houthis enjoy a wide public support however they have about 100-120 thousand closely organized people at their root and about twenty to thirty thousand armed forces.

Is the Yemen Operation a reflection of Saudi-Iran Conflict?

The visible justification for the operation is the Saudi Arabian support together with the allies to the legal Yemeni government against the dissident Houthis. Saudi Arabia is thus planning to blockade the Houthi structuring that is a threat in their southern border. However there are many other dynamics leading to this current state.

The most important one of those dynamics is that Yemen is the focal point in the traditional Iran-Saudi conflict. Iran who increased involvement in the Middle East affairs by reinforcing support to the Shia formations in Iraq and to the Al-Assad regime is also urging to reinforce its hand in Yemen by means of the Houthis they have equipped and organized behind the curtains for decades.

As a matter of fact, in one of his statements, the Iranian Chief of Staff defined Sana'a as the fourth capital city under the influence of Iran. As is known Yemen is a country with direct access to the Red Sea and the Aden Gulf and has a great strategic importance. In this way Tehran is planning to gain the upper hand by besieging its main competitor Saudi Arabia.

Of course Saudi Arabia, which regards this development as a grave threat against its own country and regime, could not remain as mere spectator and acted with its allies, the other Arabic Gulf countries.

As is seen, the backstage of the ongoing conflicts in the ethnic-sectarian-tribal triangle in Yemen is surrounded with great actors like Saudi Arabia and Iran. Behind these actors of course there are global forces like US, Russia, China that are very closely interested in the balances in the region. While the US, the Saudi ally, supports the operation fiercely, Russia and China, the allies of Iran, want to end the operation immediately.

A New Front Opened for the Further Massacre of Muslims

The only perceptible point that the intricate dynamics and processes mentioned above lead to is nothing other than Muslims, be them Shia or Sunni, being dragged into new disasters.

Ever since the beginning of the operation tens, maybe hundreds of innocent Muslim civilians have lost their lives and their possessions. It is an acknowledged fact that majority of civilian losses are not included in the official figures and that the real losses are always more than what is announced.

Ethnical, sectarian or tribal-focused conflicts give no result other than dragging the Islamic world into still deeper pains and disasters, rendering them weak and playing into the hands of those deep forces instigating these dissensions.

One of the most crucial points is to put an end to such operations, which would serve no other purpose than shedding Muslims' blood as soon as possible and to resort to a democratic solution in which reconciliation, dialogue, unity and peace will prevail throughout the country. In addition to that, a democratic assembly in which Sunnis and Shias are justly represented and a national reconciliation government will be an important step in attaining peace and stability in the country.

Operation Decisive Storm Brings Not Stability But Death to Yemen

April 5th 2015

Many people were proven right in their guesses that the Arab Spring in Yemen would turn into a hurricane of war. The so-called 'Operation Decisive Storm' by a Saudi Arabian-led coalition against the Houthis is expanding. Even though the coalition claims to target only the Houthi militia and their ammunition, many civilians face the danger of death.

It is only the eleventh day of the operation, but tens of people already lost their lives when the refugee camp in the north of the country was hit. The situation became even more grim with claims like that of Pablo Marco, the Director of Medecins Sans Frontieres, who said that the refugee camp was targeted in a planned airstrike. (1)

As people speculate over the start of a ground operation, it seems almost certain that the civilian death toll will increase. The interesting thing about the operation is that it started without a certain military target, and this made even the USA, the biggest supporter of the operation, uncomfortable. Jeff Rathke, one of the spokespeople for the State Department, said that they didn't want it to be an open-ended operation. (2)

It is possible to estimate when storms will end, but no one knows when the 'Operation Decisive Storm' will be over. Is the goal destroying the Houthis completely? Or is it to make them surrender? What conditions do they require for surrender? None of these are certain.

This uncertainty raises the likelihood of the expansion of the war and a rising death toll. In any event, it is very difficult to ensure peace in the country by military means because even if the Houthi militants lay down their weapons, the Zaidis will continue to live in the country and the devastation brought by the war will hurt not only the Zaidis of Yemen, but also its Sunni citizens.

The negative outcomes of the Arab Spring suggest that this war will not be successful in bringing peace, justice and stability to Yemen. When Muslims were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, everyone held the Western countries responsible for it, especially the USA. However, the events that followed and the current scene in Yemen make it clear that conflict amongst the Arabs can be as bloody as conflicts with the Western world.

In other words, the scenarios of war do not change:

A dictator that treats his country like a family company and runs it with an iron fist ruling over an intimidated, silenced people. A rise of public uproar, an overthrown dictator. Deteriorating stability and rising ethnic and sectarian differences. The start of a conflict that transforms into an unending war.

The locations and the names change, but the scenario stays the same. But is it always going to be like this? Is this scenario always going to be written with blood and death? A conflict reminiscent of the current situation in the Middle East was seen in Europe 350 years ago. The Thirty Years War and the Eighty Years War, resulting from some Kings favoring certain sects over others, brought about an enormous change to Europe. After this transformation, one that continued for centuries, sectarianism

was abandoned and although new kingdoms and dictatorships were formed, eventually the continent found its peace in democracy.

Some analysts believe that the Muslims in the Middle East will follow the same path. This partly results from the misconception that ISIS, Boko Haram, al-Qaeda and their likes draw their violent ways from Islam. Even though it is strictly forbidden in the Qur'an, many radical Shi'a and Sunni Muslims think that it is a part of their faith that people not from their sects should be killed.

These people, although they do not live by the compassionate, loving and considerate morality commanded by religion, pose as 'pious' people. As a result of this erroneous propaganda, millions of people misunderstand Islam. They even may come to wrongly think that Islam restricts freedom and liberties, controls thoughts and even encourages bloodshed. However, Islam is a peaceful religion that gives people the freedom of thought and expression and protects the rights of people. Almighty God explains this in a verse:

There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false gods and has faith in God has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara, 256)

There are also other verses in the Qur'an that prove that there can be no compulsion in religion: 88/21-22, 109/1-6 and 18/29 are amongst them.

Be they Zaidi or Sunni, all Muslims in Yemen aim to adopt the beautiful morality God commands and to live and spread the religion the way God teaches us. And no doubt, when people live by the morality God commands, the long-awaited peaceful atmosphere of democracy can be achieved in Yemen. When all Muslims, including those in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey unite, their strength will be a deterrent force to those warmongers willing to start anarchy and conflict at every opportunity.

A very important final thought should be kept in mind: It is not military operations that will bring stability to Yemen, it is more democracy and the belief that Muslims are brothers and sisters.

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Turkey Asks for Peace in Yemen, Not War

April 15th 2015

Despite its geographic distance, Turkey is closer to Yemen in comparison to many other Arabic countries. These bonds are rooted in history, and also feelings of religious brotherhood are the source of this affection. Turkey now has the opportunity to stand for its companion when Yemen requires it the most.

The visits Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid to Saudi Arabia and then to Iran may bring hopes for peace in Yemen. As a guest of the King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Mr. Erdogan paid an official visit to Saudi Arabia between 28 February – 2 March 2015: It was also a matter of interest that at the same time Egypt's President Sisi was also in Saudi Arabia.

Right after this visit, following the airstrikes of the coalition powers on 26 March under the lead of Egypt, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced a statement of support for the military operation. This proclamation prompted domestic critics of the Turkish government to the effect that the government was "following sectarian politics." However, President Erdogan responded to such claims by saying, "It is not possible for us to accept any claims as if 'Turkey is moving towards a dissociation based on a sectarian conflict.' The name of a sect is not a determinant for us; it is the understanding or faith, and the truth of Islam. Some could follow the Shia, and in my country there could be a majority of Sunni... Yet, in relation to faith, it is neither the Sunni, nor the Shia that would direct our future. What is essential is Islam." (1)

President Erdogan made a similar statement in Iran. This visit was planned long before the operation. Although Iran disagreed with Turkey because of her advocacy of the operation, during his joint conference with Iranian President Rouhani, President Erdogan emphasized the obligation to end the bloodshed and terminate dissociations in relation to the incidents in Iraq, Syria and Yemen:

"Neither the Shia, nor the Sunni is a matter of concern; what is of significance is being a Muslim. Man is the most honorable creature. We need to sit and talk, and find a way to end this murder. Let us reconcile the ones who are in confrontation." (2)

If we are to reflect on the conduct of Ankara today, we obviously see that Turkey is not on the side of war, but of peace in Yemen. Turkey is actively utilizing its close relations with both Iran and Saudi Arabia for the settlement of peace in Yemen. As a matter of fact, in a joint press conference with his Sudanese counterpart, Ali Ahmed Karti, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlut Cavusoglu noted this effort. Cavusoglu made the following statement:

"There is a fire in Yemen. We need to put out this fire. There are countries responsible for the current state of affairs in Yemen. We blatantly brought this on the agenda in Tehran. We believe that this issue in Yemen may be rectified through political dialogue and resolution, and countries such as Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia should play a significant role in sorting out this matter. We are in agreement with Iran on the basis of cooperation to that end. Now, we are in contact with Gulf countries and will pursue our intercourse. We are already in dialogue with Zarif on every opportunity

and will be in closer contact in the coming term. Likewise, we will undertake this correspondence with Gulf countries and Arabic states." (3)

Could Turkey really be an intermediate for peace in Yemen?

Looking at the Middle East, Turkey stands out as one of the key actors of the region. Eight years ago Turkey was influential in bringing Israel and Syria to the peace table, yet peace was interrupted at the last minute due to Israel's Lebanon operation at the time. Alon Liel, Israel's former ambassador to Ankara, explained in detail in Haaretz Daily the effort Turkey made for peacemaking. (4)

Another example for Turkey's peacemaking efforts in the Middle East includes Syria. When unrest against Assad began, Turkey did not come out against Assad at once, but made a sincere effort to establish peace. She advised Assad to democratize and stabilize Syria. Additionally Turkey has preached a lesson of peace and compassion to the world by hosting on her territory 1.6 million refugees without discriminating between religion or ethnic identity. This stance of Turkey is a significant indicator of the fact that Turkey's foreign policy regarding the Middle East does not rely on ethnic or religious discrimination.

Turkey had previously pursued a similar effort for Palestine and Lebanon. Though she consists of a major Sunni population, the fact that she has friendly relations with Iran -with a major Shia population- strengthens her position regarding Yemen. When Iran was pressured by the whole world to end the nuclear project she was developing, Turkey and Brazil proposed an important suggestion for a solution.

Furthermore, Turkey becomes a significant hope for Yemen when all this experience and her relations with the region are taken into consideration. If Turkey procures a lasting peace in Yemen by siding with Iran and Saudi Arabia, this would be a great success for the region. The next step would be to provide permanent stability and initiate a recovery progress in Yemen. For this to be possible, Muslims in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Yemen must remember that they are brothers and put aside any sectarian enmity.

Indeed it is highly significant that Turkey refrains from contributing to the bloodshed of Muslims everywhere in the world and focuses on love, understanding, dialogue and diplomacy. The fact that solutions are being sought in brotherhood should bring hope not only to Yemen, but also to the entire Middle East.

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Deaths Cannot Stop More People Being Killed

May 3rd 2015

The SEYAJ Organization for Child Protection has issued a statement about the situation in Yemen. (1) It reports that more than five million children in Yemen are facing death or disease due to a lack of fresh drinking water and sufficient food. This is because no food, medicine or fuel have been allowed into the country for the last month.

Many of the stocks possessed by families to meet their basic needs have been used up. Water and electricity plants are out of commission and sea and air traffic has all but come to a halt.

The organization reports that schools in Sana'a are closed and more than five million students are thus being deprived of the right to an education. Some 150 schools are inoperable as they have been bombed on suspicion of being used as weapons warehouses. Moreover, it is not only schools that the bombs have destroyed; hospitals and energy plants have also been damaged in blatant violation of international law and agreements on suspicion of being used for military purposes. Some 500,000 people have had to abandon their homes because of the fighting.

Children are of course the first to be affected by these conditions. At least three million children are suffering because of power blackouts in Sana'a, Aden, Saada, Taiz, al-Hodeidah, Ibb, Ataq and Haradh. There are also shortages of food, health services and housing in these towns.

Recently, the World Food Programme (WFP) reported that food aid was not getting through in Yemen because of significant fuel shortages and had almost come to a halt. In a statement from the U.N.'s Geneva Office the organization called on all sides in Yemen to implement a ceasefire to provide the fuel needed for food aid to be maintained. (2) That call has so far gone unheeded.

The Saudi-led coalition is repeating the error made in various parts of the world in believing that it can obtain results through aerial bombardments. The fact is that aerial bombardments merely worsen the conflict and internal strife rather than ending it, not to mention being a dangerous policy that inevitably leads to large numbers of civilian deaths. Some politicians and soldiers think that supporting aerial bombardments is the only way of showing opposition to secessionist movements and terrorism. Even more amazing is that local politicians are hugely supportive of such operations that will obviously harm their own country.

All the militants, soldiers and politicians involved in the fighting in Yemen must know that murder can never be resolved through further murder. The way to prevent deaths is not by killing more people.

These aerial bombardments are literally punishing the people of Yemen en masse: A whole people, be they Zaidi and Sunni, guilty or innocent, women and children, the sick and the elderly, are all being targeted. This is an inhumane tactic and a sign of impotence. Mass bombardments or blockading an entire country are an explicit expression of failure and inadequacy.

In all democratic systems, people who have committed crimes, even the most pathological killers, are caught and placed on trial. You will never see scores of people in a part of any European country

being killed for the sake of punishing one guilty man. Even if wrong policies are sometimes adopted, human life is of the greatest value in these countries and those who take life unlawfully know that they will have to account for themselves before the law.

The command "Thou shalt not kill" that appears in both the Gospel and the Torah also appears in the Qur'an. God has told Muslims that killing one person is equivalent to killing all of mankind.

Any sincere believer who abides by the Qur'an, be he Sunni or Zaidi, will strive to the utmost to protect the life of even a single person. Therefore, no Muslim can ever advocate aerial bombardments and speak along the lines of, "Of course one or two people may be killed by accident in such an operation."

What Yemeni Muslims must do is to espouse and encourage peace. The first priority in doing that is for the sides to employ only the language of love. The Qur'an, the fundamental source of Islam, emphasizes the concepts of love, affection, compassion, humility, self-sacrifice and peace.

The Houthis and the government, Iran and Saudi Arabia must at once abandon the kind of inflammatory language that encourages further conflict. Otherwise, there may be a humanitarian tragedy of the first magnitude in Yemen. Other Muslim countries – and Turkey first and foremost – must at once mobilize to prevent the deaths of even more Muslims by building peace in Yemen. Urgent steps must be taken, and there must be no waiting for a ceasefire for the building of permanent peace. A well-coordinated and large-scale humanitarian aid campaign must be started so the necessary things can be brought to the people of Yemen at once.

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Yemen Needs Urgent Ceasefire

April 21st 2015

Airstrikes against the Houthi Ansar Allah movement in Yemen by the Saudi-led coalition, originally made up of UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar and later joined by Gulf Countries, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Sudan, is continuing at full-speed. In addition to this constant pounding by the coalition, bloody clashes between the armed groups in the country are also underway. Forces of the ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Houthis fight the militia of the South Yemen People's Committee and the forces supporting the President Hadi.

The inevitable outcome of airstrikes: Civilian casualties

According to Jens Laerke, the spokesperson for the United Nations' Humanitarian Office, many civilians lost their lives in the airstrikes that affected 18 of 22 Yemen's governorates, with the most casualties in Aden, South Yemen.

Joel Millman, the spokesperson of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said that at least 40 people lost their lives as a result of the airstrikes on the Al-Mazrak refugee camp a couple of weeks ago and many innocent people were injured. Witnesses reported that the ambulances had difficulty in reaching the area due to the ongoing airstrikes.

The day after this first attack, 35 people, including 15 civilians, lost their lives after a Houthi checkpoint, 140 km south of Sana'a was hit. In another strike a yoghurt factory was struck in Al Hudaydah district and 37 workers died and 75 people were heavily injured. The coalition forces claimed that the Houthis used the factory as ammunition storage.

Laerke, during a press conference held in the Geneva Office of the UN, explained the death toll reported in 20 days: '731 civilians lost their lives in the fights that took place from 19 March to 12 April in Yemen. 150 thousand Yemenis were displaced during the same period.'

Majority of the Yemenis Face Starvation and Thirst

Even if the civilians manage to escape the civil war unscathed, they are facing severe poverty. Life conditions deteriorate every day as people struggle with severe hunger.

United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recently released a report showing the scale of the humanitarian disaster Yemen faces. The report explains that the clashes caused the marketplaces to shut down in big cities, causing price surges. The operation coincided with the agricultural season, which is critical for food production, threatening the harvest and the necessary preparations for new crops.

As a result of this, 11 million people face starvation and 5 million people aren't able to get their daily food needs. The statement says that 16 million out of the total 26 million Yemenis are being deprived of potable water resources and are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance whereas 850,000 children are suffering from malnutrition.

After UN called for \$274 million for urgent humanitarian aid for 7.5 million people in Yemen on April 17, Saudi Arabia pledged \$274 million dollars. Needless to say, this amount is only a small fraction of the billion-dollar cost of the 'Operation Decisive Storm' led by Saudi Arabia, which caused destruction in Yemen.

Military Campaigns and Clashes Should be Stopped Immediately with a Country-wide Ceasefire

The lives of 26 million people in Yemen and their rights are much more important than the political goals of the neighboring countries. For this reason, it is imperative that the regional countries that started a race for power and influence in the region over Yemen stop this approach immediately.

It is obvious that Iran and Saudi Arabia, or the coalition countries that deem impeding this political issue in Yemen through strikes cannot accomplish any resolution through policies of bloodshed or violence. Military methods and air bombardments mostly result in loss of civilian life and damage to the innocent, thereby could never establish the loving and peaceful atmosphere that would remove this social strife in Yemen.

The situation became especially worrisome after the coalition's spokesman Brigadier General Ahmed Asiri made the following statement: 'This effort needs patience. Our possibilities and time are not limited, so we are not in a hurry. We will continue the operation until we reach our goals.'

Al-Asiri saying, 'Our possibilities and time are not limited, so we are not in a hurry,' doesn't seem to understand that every second the campaign goes on, Yemen will be immersed more in blood and fire, the country will be destroyed more, there will be more civilian deaths and the surviving people of Yemen will be facing more difficulties.

For this reason, it is of paramount importance that the country leaders act sensibly and reasonably and without ever losing time should stop military campaigns and clashes to urgently announce a ceasefire.

It was clearly seen many times over the decades that military operations never solved any problems anywhere in the world, but only exacerbated the problems. Therefore, the only solution for Yemen is holding a democratic election open to all parties in the country, as a result of which a peaceful administration agreeable to everyone is established.

What Is Happening in Yemen Is No Longer A Political, but A Humanitarian Crisis

April 26th 2015

It's been announced that the operation Decisive Storm by Arab coalition forces in Yemen has ended. Nonetheless there are still news reports in the world media of occasional bombings. The United Nations announced that more than a thousand people have been killed, and over 4,300 injured in Yemen during the clashes since March 19. (1) According to these reports, most of the casualties in Sana'a, Aden, Sa'ada and Al Dhale'e are women and children. It was noted that in the capital Sana'a alone, 209 people died and 936 were injured.

Moreover, the economy of the country, which was already in dire straits, received a further blow as a result of the air strikes. There is no bread in bakeries in Yemen, diseases have become widespread, and people do not have access to food and life-sustaining necessities since international airports aren't operating. More than half of the country's 26-million population is in need of humanitarian aid. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and World Health Organization (WHO) stated that about two million children cannot maintain their education, and warned that the country's healthcare system is about to collapse. It's impossible to regard all this information and numbers as mere statistics; this state of affairs – a matter of official record – shows that Yemen is now on the brink of a humanitarian crisis. (2)

According to some sources, the real reason why the Saudi-led operation was ended is the worsening humanitarian crisis. Residents of Sana'a in particular were forced to leave their homes due to Houthi militants' attacks on residential areas, coalition forces' bombings and intense street clashes. Three weeks before the operation ended, thousands of Yemeni people fled the fighting and took shelter in refugee camps in Djibouti and Somalia. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that Yemen would need \$274 million in urgent humanitarian aid over the next three months. (3)

The entire nation is on edge because of the lack of fuel and food aid, power cuts and lack of security. Human rights organizations draw attention to the fact that in some regions, poor families in particular do not have access to food and medical supplies. The people of the country, which was already suffering serious problems in security and healthcare and where basic services cannot be supplied, is hoping and waiting for stability to come. Oxfam, a relief organization, said, "*Over 60 percent of the population – 16 million people – were already in need of some form of aid before the air strikes started. Conflict in Yemen is making a dire situation worse...*" Heavy air strikes across the country result in food and fuel shortages. (4)

What has taken place in Yemen in the last month in fact reveals a concrete reality: For the sake of some political ends, Western countries have no qualms about organizing military operations in lands which they classify as "third world," or providing logistic or intelligence support or weapons to such interventions. These countries send their intelligence staff and set up military bases in the region

supposedly to fight terrorism and stabilize the region, and ignore the deaths of innocent civilians, women and children. As in the case of Yemen, international organizations are content to announce statistics related to material and human casualties, and busy themselves with preparing after-action reports.

What needs to be done to end this conflict that affects each and every individual in Yemen, to overcome the humanitarian crisis, to establish security and stability and to bring both material and spiritual welfare to the country is to end the sectarian disintegration of society. So long as Muslims keep blaming and shedding the blood of each other simply because they are Shia or Sunni, these troubles will not come to an end. The fact is that during the time of the Prophet (pbuh) there were no factions whatsoever among Muslims based on nation or ethnicity. The real reason for the sufferings today is that the Islamic countries have departed from this sincerity, and have forgotten this loving and affectionate manner.

As is known to all, there are numerous ethnic groups in the Middle East such as Arabs, Turkmen, Azeris, Persians, Kurds and Turks, yet what they all share in common is that they are all Muslims. Since this fundamental and vital value that forms unity and bonds of love and brotherhood is being put aside, there has been neither stability nor peace in the Middle East since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. All Muslims need to unite at once in order to put an end to the backwardness, instability, violence and terror prevalent not only in Yemen but throughout the Islamic world in general. All these pains can be eased when countries practice policies that serve not only their own interests but provide material and spiritual comfort, peace and security to all peoples in the region.

For Yemen to be more powerful, to heal its wounds, to end disputes and to attain a level of cultural, moral and social development that will be a model for the entire Islamic world, Muslims there must sincerely and lovingly embrace each other at once and never forget that they are brothers. That's why Shia and Sunni groups in the country must immediately – and urgently – take the necessary steps towards unity.

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An International Model To Put An End to the Conflict in the Islamic World Is Possible

June 17th 2015

The airstrike operation initiated in Yemen by Saudi-led coalition forces under the name "Decisive Storm" on March 26th came to an end on April 21st, and operation "Restoring Hope" for the people of Yemen was announced instead; a ceasefire was then declared. Although the fighting has eased, occasional coalition bombardments are still taking place. Efforts to reconcile the sides are also being made.

The US, which encouraged Saudi Arabia and its partners in the coalition to undertake the operation against the Houthis, is now talking to the Houthis in order to establish peace. Rajeh Badi, a spokesman for the al-Hadi government in Yemen, suggested that the US had met with the Houthis in Oman. In a statement to Reuters, Badi said that the US had met with Shiite Houthis in Oman: *"We have been informed that there are meetings, at American request, and that a private American plane carried the Houthis to Muscat."* He added that the Yemeni government was not party to the talks. (1)

In the wake of that claim, Marie Harf, senior advisor for strategic communications to U.S. Secretary of State, confirmed that Anne W. Patterson, the top diplomat for the Near East, had indeed met with representatives of the Houthi in Oman. (2)

Daifallah al-Shami, a senior Houthi official, issued a statement that his movement would take part – without preconditions – in U.N.-backed peace talks intended to put an end to the civil conflict and due to be held in Geneva on June 14th.

We are looking at a very striking fact when we evaluate this development considering the events in recent years in a region stretching from Libya to Afghanistan, including Yemen.

Forces of influence in the Arab-Islamic world are capable of assuming a role in building peace and establishing order on the one hand while inflicting terrible destruction on these lands on the other. So enfeebled is the Arab-Islamic world that it has come to look for peace from countries that stand to benefit economically and politically from Muslims killing one another. This enormous dichotomy is a clear sign that any peace established by parties that stand to gain from selling arms to the Arab-Islamic world, or exploiting its oil, can never provide a permanent solution, but will give birth to new conflicts instead.

The only way of halting the fighting is for the Islamic world to establish unity based on permanent reconciliation within itself. Let us not forget that in the Qur'an, God commands Muslims to be united: **"Those who are unbelievers are the friends and protectors of one another. If you do not act in this way [be friends and protectors of one another] there will be turmoil in the land and great corruption."** (Surat al-Anfal, 73)

So how is that unity to come about?

When they look at the seemingly unceasing turmoil and conflict in the Islamic world, many people think that any agreement or unity in these lands is a risible suggestion. Yet if the countries of the world can coalesce around oil, or even football, then Muslims can recall the words of God and be united as brothers.

For example, in the same way that the European Union is united in a broad economic, political, military, cultural and social context, an Islamic Union can also come together under globally agreed-to terms. Indeed, a union of affection established by Muslims who regard one another as brothers, as commanded in the verses of the Qur'an, would be much more powerful than the EU, which is based almost entirely upon economic interests. In that regard, an Islamic Union will represent an example of a fine union for the peace for which everyone longs.

All Islamic countries that join the Islamic Union must be guaranteed that the independence and sovereignty of all the states in the region will be respected: In other words, no one country will dominate the union, and some countries will not dominate others for economic or political advantage. Members of the union will thus maintain their own sovereign structures, but will act as a single nation when it comes to matters of agreed cooperation.

Member countries' borders will be inviolable and each country will be independent in terms of its domestic affairs. Disagreements will be resolved by peaceful means instead of through international policies looking for military solutions. The resolution of problems through policies of love, rather than resorting to threats and force, will also further strengthen the union.

In order for this to be possible, guarantees must be set in place to ensure that human rights and basic freedoms, such as the freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief are respected across the union as a whole and in all its individual members. This will lead to the union being respected and listened to across the world.

In order for such a union capable of producing joint development policies based on consultations to come about, policies aimed at establishing a union of hearts among Muslim countries must also be adopted. Programs must be instituted in all media organizations and educational institutions, including those in Yemen, teaching that Muslims are brothers, not enemies. National leaders should make a significant contribution to the founding of that union by issuing statements in line with these programs.

Once that is done, it will be possible to build an Islamic world in which Muslims live in peace and tranquility in artistically built cities and at the very highest levels of quality.

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A Lack of Quality Is Feeding the Conflicts in the Islamic World

June 29th 2015

The fighting in Yemen is continuing. The Houthis have stepped up their attacks on the Saudi Army and coalition forces stationed on the Saudi-Yemeni border in recent weeks. In turn, Saudi-led coalition forces are bombing Houthi bases near the town of Hajja on the Saudi border from the air.

There is still no hope of peace in the country where ongoing internal conflict, aerial attacks and a maritime blockade by the coalition are leading to shortages of food, water and medicines.

The coalition forces want the Houthis to depart the capital and for the exiled president Mansour Hadi, currently in Riyadh, to return to the country, in line with a U.N. ruling. However, there are as yet no clear results from talks aimed at establishing a permanent ceasefire between the sides brokered by U.N. Special Envoy to Yemen Ismail Walad Sheikh Ahmad.

On the other hand, a number of Shiite mosques in the capital, Sana'a, were bombed last week. The Yemeni off-shoot of al-Qaeda meanwhile maintains its influence in the region by controlling the city of Mukalla in the east of the country. In these pieces about Yemen we have long spoken of the poverty in the country, and the continuing domestic turmoil. Yet we would honestly rather have been able to speak of increasing prosperity in Yemen, the reconstruction of its cities, and of Shiites and Sunnis praying and breaking fast together.

Yes, there is a major climate of conflict in Yemen today, meaning that a great many people are living under very harsh conditions. Looking back in time, however, it is very hard to find much to praise in those days either.

Sana'a, Cairo, Baghdad and Aleppo are cities that face the same problems even when there is no fighting. The region is dominated by brown dust, pollution, poor infrastructure and poor people. The lands from Afghanistan to Libya have become places where women cannot feel safe to move about freely.

The word "democracy" has been much repeated here, but there has been little sign of it in practice. The unease of today was also caused in those lands by Gaddafi and Saddam in the past. A mindset that believed that anyone who disagreed needed to be killed was dominant. People were sometimes oppressed in the name of politics, sometimes in the name of religion and sometimes for national, ethnic or tribal differences. Freedom of ideas and belief was restricted: Rulers solely sought to impose their own ideologies, beliefs and lifestyles. The ruled, on the other hand, struggled to make a living, mere survival representing their only consolation.

No works of art like those of the past appeared in these lands bereft of mutual understanding. No aesthetic concerns could be seen at all, apart from the palaces of the dictators. For hundreds of years, not a single world-renowned scientist has emerged from those lands.

Yet those lands once led the world in terms of ideas, science and art. One of the sources of that superior civilization was the enthusiastic and determined implementation of the open-mindedness and rationality revealed in the Qur'an.

Members of other faiths and civilizations once greatly admired Muslims. Today's Muslims need to know about the glorious history of Islamic civilization and they must bear the fervor and responsibility that goes with it.

It is possible to rebuild a splendor similar to that of the past and for Muslims to be at the forefront of both a culture and a civilization that enlightens the world. However, it is of the greatest importance for all such activity in that regard to be done in a spirit of unity and union. If a culture that regards differences with understanding, that uses its power and energy for the benefit of not only Muslims but all mankind and a culture that is conciliatory and peace-loving prevails among Muslims, then the Islamic world can build the greatest civilization of the 21st Century. It is the responsibility of us, the Ummah, to turn to the true spirit of Islam and put these grim days behind us, God willing.

Yemen: A Country That Nobody Sees and Nobody Hears

October 8th 2015

With the exception of Italy, European countries have done their utmost to ignore the fact that the Mediterranean has literally turned into a refugee graveyard. Nobody cared that thousands of people, including women and children, were dying as they tried to cross the Mediterranean.

The Germans thought about their public deficits. Spain wondered whether tourism revenues would rise this year, while the French debated their new intelligence law.

Yet when migrants began entering the Balkans via the Aegean, and from there into the European heartland, then their drama began finding a place on the European agenda. Yet its presence on that agenda did not, of course, mean that a humane solution was found. Indeed, rather than seek a solution, some European politicians began saying the most inhumane and disgraceful things, such as, "Let us send money and Turkey can keep them," "We will become a minority if we admit migrants" and "We will admit Christian migrants, but not Muslims." How quickly the Europeans seem to have forgotten that their prosperity was built on the resources obtained from the countries of refugees arriving from Africa and the Middle East.

Countries from Africa to the Far East, such as Libya, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Chad had always been the colonies of various European countries. Europeans extracted their raw materials and processed them using the people of the regions as their workforce. Now today many people in these lands are abandoning those lands out of fear for their lives and are trying to reach Europe.

In addition to Libya, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, Yemen is also now staring disaster in the face. The Red Cross's declaration that "Yemen after five months looks like Syria after five years" (1) reveals the terrible nature of the situation.

Yet Yemen does not make the headlines as frequently as other countries in a similar predicament. It suffers greater devastation each and every day, and hunger and diseases are spreading fast. People sitting in their own homes are killed by bombs. The death toll is now regarded as mere statistical data, and does not even attract the interest of the press agencies.

In its latest report regarding Yemen, Amnesty International said that the Saudi-led bombing of Yemen had resulted in a "trail of civilian death and destruction" and that this was a "war crime." (2) The figures in the report reveal that 4,000 people have died to date in the operations, and that civilians constituted half of these.

The drama playing out in Yemen is not limited to murder and slaughter alone. The UN says that 80% of the 20 million civilians in Yemen stand in need of aid, and describes this as a "catastrophe."

Ertharin Cousin, head of the UN's World Food Programme, states that they are unable to get humanitarian aid through to the Yemeni people because of the ongoing violence. The head of the WFP paid a three-day visit to Yemen and called for all the groups fighting in the country to allow humanitarian aid to pass through. UN humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien says that, "the scale of human suffering is almost incomprehensible." (3) O'Brien also reports that humanitarian aid is failing

to reach four people out of five, that almost 1.5 million people have had to abandon their homes, and that blood banks have closed.

Somali refugees who fled war and poverty in their own country and settled in Yemen are now trying to return home because of the worsening conditions. The fact that nearly 29,000 Somalis have returned home is an indication of how far things have worsened in Yemen. (4)

It seems that the sides to the fighting in Yemen, and their sponsors, only care about their own side's achieving dominance in the country.

In fact, all known means were employed to prevent the current situation in Yemen from arising. The UN stepped in, intermediaries became involved and bilateral talks were held with the opposing sides in the country. The U.S., Saudi Arabia and even Iran became involved. Aid organizations such as the Red Crescent and the Red Cross strove to get aid through to the country during ceasefire periods. None of these efforts has led to a solution and Yemen is now on the brink of the abyss.

Yet if the same sensitivity were shown to the needy people of Yemen that is shown to stranded whales or hunted seals, the situation would be very different. If Iran and Saudi Arabia could have sat down and worked together to unite Yemen, rather than bring their own supporters to power, none of these things would be happening. At the very least, the two countries can – and should – take steps now and strive to create places where Yemeni refugees can live under humane conditions and be housed in safety. Iran and Saudi Arabia both possess the financial resources with which to do this. This is a technical solution that may be applied to prevent the problem from growing even worse, yet there is a moral solution that can eliminate the problem once and for all.

The underlying reasons for the failure to find a definitive solution to the problem of Yemen are moral defects such as selfishness, self-interest, greed and apathy. The only way of eliminating these defects is by increasing people's moral sensitivities. Someone who heeds the voice of his conscience, who has powerful feelings of love and affection and compassion, and who realizes the importance of sharing and mutual aid, can never be uncaring or insensitive in the face of such a tragedy. The real problem is therefore the moral weakness and the lack of love in the world. And it is the elimination of this moral weakness that will resolve the refugee problem, one of the main problems now facing the world.

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The Only Solution to the Tragedy in Yemen: The Reconstruction of Peace and Love

December 4th 2015

The turmoil and conflict that began between the Shiite Houthis and Sunni Arabs in Yemen 2014 has today turned into a civil war involving almost the entire country. What we are looking at today, with the Arab coalition's intervention in the civil war in March this year with air operations aimed at supporting the internationally recognized government, is destruction and disaster.

The worst victims of this, as in all Islamic countries under fire, are innocent civilians. Hundreds of civilian targets have been hit in aerial bombardments. Thousands of civilians have been martyred.

Last Wednesday, the U.N. announced that 5,700 people, including 830 women and children, had lost their lives since March 26. Johannes Van Der Klaauw, the U.N.'s humanitarian coordinator for Yemen, said that 21.2 million people, 82% of the population, are in need of humanitarian aid. Fourteen million people are deprived of adequate health care, 1.8 million children have been unable to go to school since the fighting began and some 320,000 children are malnourished.

Van Der Klaauw also reported that 120,000 people have had to flee the country as refugees, while 2.3 million people have had to leave their homes and lands. The number of human rights violations since the start of the war exceeds 8,800. (1)

According to U.N. High Commission for Human Rights spokesman Rupert Colville, more than 2,300 civilians lost their lives between March and October 2015: Again, according to Colville, two-thirds of civilians in that time frame were killed as a result of air strikes. Colville says that this level shows that something is badly amiss and that the requisite caution is not being taken. (2) Another recent example of the wide-ranging civilian losses is as follows:

Last September, at least 130 Yemeni citizens were reported to have lost their lives in an aerial attack on the town of Mokha. Hassan Boucenine, the Yemeni head of mission at Doctors without Frontiers, stated that he was absolutely unable to attach any meaning to the attack, and that the target was not a military one, but explicitly a house where a wedding was taking place. (3)

The policy of the U.S., which at first sight appears to be supporting the Sunni Arab coalition, is one of the striking aspects of the war in Yemen.

Although the countries in the coalition are not openly involved in the fighting, the U.S. is one of the powers that has long been staging military operations in Yemen. Wishing to prevent the strengthening of al-Qaeda in Yemen in the wake of the Arab Spring, the U.S. stepped up unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attacks, thus intending to reduce al-Qaeda's room to maneuver to a minimum. Intense aerial bombings were carried out in those parts of Yemen where al-Qaeda was strong. However, rather than achieving U.S. aims, these attacks made the organization look as though they had been wronged and this reinforced opposition to the U.S. among local people.

After October 2014, when the Houthis initiated their policy of expansion toward the capital, Sana'a, the U.S. made al-Qaeda a constant target of UAV attacks and even backed the Houthi advance.

The U.S. has to date hit hundreds of al-Qaeda targets, but has never hit a Houthi one. The U.S. has also targeted tribes that oppose al-Qaeda that resist the Houthis' policies of expansion. Nabeel Khoury, a U.S. diplomat serving with NATO, says that many innocent civilians have lost their lives in every U.S. UAV attack, and that for this reason, for every person killed, 40 to 60 new 'enemies of America' emerge.

The Islamic world has a responsibility in this critical state of affairs, in which large numbers of Muslims are suffering, to strive to bring the fighting to an end as a matter of urgency and to spread a spirit of love, peace and brotherhood among all Muslims in order to bring this strife that sets brother against brother to an end. In doing so, it is also vitally important that all the needs of the Yemeni people, who are suffering terrible poverty and want and living in hunger and thirst, should be met without further loss of time.

However, even more than all these material requirements, what the people of Yemen need most of all, just like everyone else in the world, is love. Contrary to what people think, it is not weakness to regard love as the most important component in the establishment of social order. Indeed, societies with powerful bonds of love among individuals have always been far stronger in the face of destructive impacts from the inside or outside.

The Muslim people of Yemen, who until yesterday were living in peace and brotherhood, and who speak the same language and believe in the same God, can only be freed from these tragedies caused by division and dispute by re-establishing love among them. Only when the whole Islamic world, not just Yemen, fully established bonds of unity, love and brotherhood within itself, can it rid itself of the wickedness and exploitation of foreign powers that regard division and conflict among Muslims as a great opportunity, and be freed from military operations. Only then can it achieve peace, security, happiness and well-being.

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Conclusion

How Can Yemen Find Salvation?

Sparked by a political crisis and later erupting into conflict and civil war, the tension within Yemen has now become a full-scale war that is being further fueled by the attacks of the coalition forces from outside the country. Hunger, poverty and death have now become a virtually inseparable part of Yemen.

In addition to all these facts, the events that sparked in Yemen have brought another important truth to surface; the Yemeni people are not the only ones that suffer. The other Middle Eastern countries that have suffered under anti-democratic regimes for years are on the brink of a major disaster as well. In Libya, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, people are faced with a situation that is not unlike the one in Yemen.

It is only natural for the people of Yemen, who have been oppressed for more than half a century, to demand democracy, prosperity, peace, safety, liberty, and comfort. However, merely changing administrations has proved insufficient for the salvation they longed for. The changing of an administration offered solutions that only salvaged the day, and emergent elements such as al-Qaeda, ISIS or Shi'ite fanaticism produced even more tragic outcomes. So how did the country come to this point?

Following are the four prominent factors that have led Yemen to the brink of the abyss and consequently down into the flames:

- Materialism and atheism,
- Fanaticism,
- Sectarianism,
- Tribalism

Any regulation or agreement that includes even one of the factors above will render all the solution efforts in Yemen futile, because these factors are based upon a mentality that denies others' the right to live. For that reason, a solution that will ensure peaceful coexistence among the members of different tribes or sects should be sought in Yemen. In conclusion, there is only one solution to the injustice, turmoil, terrorism, massacres, hunger, poverty, and persecution in Yemen: That solution is the tenets of the Qur'an.

When the problems that are present in the country are considered as a whole, one will realize that these incidents stem from lovelessness, hatred, animosity, enmity, self-interest, individualism, apathy, and ruthlessness. And the way to overcome and completely eliminate these problems is to ensure the adoption of fine moral qualities among people such as love, compassion, mercy, empathy, self-sacrifice, enthusiasm, sensibility, altruism, amity, and common sense. Below are the essential points that are based upon such moral understanding and will remedy the four factors that lead to disorder in Yemen:

1) Fascism, communism, materialism, violence and terrorism are indispensable parts of a whole. It is impossible to establish amity and brotherhood among people solely through military methods, unless they are made to realize that such ideologies which promote revolt, dissension, conflict,

corruption, lovelessness, selfishness, and immorality among people are nothing but a massive deception.

Be it fascist or communist, the members of such organizations regard life as an arena of struggle and conflict. One believes that the cause of conflict lies in class differences among people, as for the other, it is the ethnic differences. For the members of these organizations who see life as merely a struggle, notions of family, religious moral values, virtue and honor lose their meaning. Thus people become susceptible to the influence of all kinds of depraved ideologies or movements.

To be able to nip the ideology-based terrorist movements in the bud, the youth should be taught and explained the erroneous aspects of all ideologies such as communism and fascism; but, along with these, they should definitely be told the truths based on scientific facts as well.

However, up until today, neither in Yemen nor in any other country, no attempt has been made to put an intellectual struggle into practice. An individual who has been brainwashed by the materialist education system for years should be told that communism and fascism stem from ignorance and lack of knowledge. The fact that they are groundless and false beliefs should be explained and all of their fallacious aspects should be displayed to the individual. After proving such ideologies to be fallacious, when the individual is told about the love of God, their commitment to such fallacious ideas will effectively come to an end. The ideology they once believed in and the terror they used to inflict will no longer be meaningful to them. Thus, the mind of the said individual will have been conquered by the truth. No terrorist organization can stand against an intellectual struggle especially when it is carried out through the television and the radio and a movement that loses its intellectual credence can be considered dead. Therefore, the states should either undertake this task of education personally, or, in line with this purpose, employ and support the nongovernmental organizations that are willing to take this task upon themselves.

2) The fallacious aspects of the twisted religious notions practiced by warlike organizations such as ISIS and al-Qaeda and that contradicts with the Qur'an should be emphasized; the fact that it is the bigoted mentality that is oppressive and prohibitive, not the true Islam, should be expressed extensively along with its evidences.

In order for the misjudgments and misconceptions towards Muslims to be eliminated, the citizens of Yemen should be taught that it is not Islam and the Muslims they should beware of, but the bigoted mentality. The main reason behind the problems that are attributed to Islam is, in truth, ignorance and bigotry and the only cure for this affliction is education. Those who consider violence as a method of seeking justice should be made to see that violence completely contradicts Islam; on the contrary, by perpetrating violence, they will only harm the Muslims and the entire humanity, and through education, the supporters of such organizations should be purified of this violent mindset. It is highly important to adopt an educational policy in this direction as soon as possible.

In this education system, after explaining that Islam does not promote violence as a means to seek one's rights, in the second step, it should be taught that it is not in line with the Qur'an for Muslims to resort to oppression and compulsion; that instead of resorting to these, it is necessary to use the methods of persuasion incorporating scientific evidences and inviting people to the true path only using nice words. Another topic that must be communicated is that the tenets of Islam preach freedom of belief.

Through an education policy adopting these principals, further losses of lives will be prevented, billions of dollars will be saved, terrorism will not be disseminated and people will be ensured freer and safer lives. Fighting against the spreading of violence through education instead of weapons will be a far more humane, effective and permanent solution that should urgently be employed.

Not only the Yemeni people, but the whole world should know that Islam is not the source of terrorism, on the contrary, it is its only solution. Islam is the religion of love and compassion that is based on mercy, forgiveness and justice.

3) The on-going conflict between Shiite Houthi tribe, Zaidis and Sunnis in Yemen is the major factor that led the country to the predicament it is in today. The Yemeni government is trying to resolve the conflicts through security measures, and occasionally, through armed intervention. However, instead of employing such methods, it will be remarkably effective to remind all the parties that God commands the believers in the Qur'an to treat people in the nicest way possible, even those they bear enmity towards.

It is a grave mistake for Muslims to carry out hateful, resentful attacks against each other despite the obvious commandment of God in Surat al-Fussilat, verse 34. Muslims should immediately correct this mistake by casting sectarian differences aside and unite in solidarity as God rendered it a religious duty. In the Qur'an, God informs all the Muslims to act in unison "as a single community":

Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate. Remember God's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way God makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surah Al 'Imran, 103)

The members of the predominant Sunni and Zaidi sects in Yemen should aim for a unity built upon the policies of love. Only then can Yemen have the part it deserves in the world politics. For this to be possible, firstly, all the regulations based on sectarian differences should be abolished in Yemen. The first step can be taken by launching a joint initiative towards removing from the textbooks the statements that promote enmity between sects. When appointing government officials, the candidates' qualifications and competence should be taken into consideration rather than their sects or tribes.

4) Another vital problem of Yemen that must be solved is tribalism.

The population of Yemen consists of tribes that are far more numerous than many other Arab countries, and these tribes are engaged in major disputes among each other. The tribes act as if they are autonomous states. This situation has a negative impact on both the economical and the political structure of the country. However, Almighty God, Who created all the members of all tribes, informs people that superiority is achieved through a deep fear of God, not by being a member of a particular tribe:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's Sight is the one with the most piety. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat, 13)

The solution, as is also understood from these four points, should certainly be sought in the path God and our Prophet (pbuh) have shown to us. The sole and permanent solution God and His Messenger (pbuh) offer us is 'the unification of the entire Islamic community around a leader, and the establishment of the Turkish-Islamic Union'.

When the Islamic world forms a powerful union, no longer will anyone under the roof of this union suffer oppression and injustice, and no one will be able to attempt to persecute its citizens. Each country will preserve its sovereign structure, but the safety, happiness, welfare and comfort of the citizens of all the countries will be ensured by the Turkish-Islamic Union.

This union, which will be formed through the unification of the Turkish Islamic states, will bring about solidarity, order and peace not only to Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, and Jordan, but to the whole Islamic world ranging from Morocco to Fiji, from Indonesia to Chad. Only then will true democracy

be achieved, only then will all the people be equal, only then will poverty be eliminated, and only then will a great breakthrough be achieved in science, arts and technology. Only then will a person living in any village of Tunisia or in the capital of Indonesia be able to live in comfort, beauty, plenitude, and prosperity to the fullest.

The Turkish-Islamic Union does not mean the reestablishment of the Ottoman Empire as some would believe. The Great Ottoman Empire provided the best living conditions for its people and set an example with its respect for all religions, beliefs and ethnicities, but there were instances when the Empire followed erroneous practices and methods as well. People should learn from these mistakes and not repeat them. Indeed, the aim of the Turkish-Islamic Union is to establish a civilization that is completely in line with the tenets of the Qur'an, and unprecedented in splendor and might. By God's leave, this civilization will be a means to the complete and utter elimination of oppression, and establishing the reign of truth and justice all around the world.

Appendix:

The Deception of Evolution

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of Creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of miraculous order in the universe and in living things, as well as by the discovery of more than 450 million fossils revealing that evolution never happened. In this way, science confirmed the fact that God created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science.

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the fact of Creation to account for the origin of life.

We have examined the collapse of the theory of evolution and the proofs of Creation in great scientific detail in many of our works, and are still continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

The scientific collapse of Darwinism

As a pagan doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced most extensively in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859. In this book, he opposed, in his own eyes, the fact that God created different living species on Earth separately, for he erroneously claimed that all living beings had a common ancestor and had diversified over time through small changes. Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," the theory failed in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.
- 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.
- 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The first insurmountable step: the origin of life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on Earth 3.8 billion years ago, supposed to have happened as a result of coincidences. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions that the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, we need to ask: **How did this "first cell" originate?**

Since the theory of evolution ignorantly denies Creation, it maintains that the "first cell" originated as a product of blind coincidences within the laws of nature, without any plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life comes from life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, which asserts that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, **it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.**

Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, **five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory.** In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, **Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."** (Sidney Fox, Klaus Dose, *Molecular Evolution and The Origin of Life*, W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, 1972, p. 4.)

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive efforts of the twentieth century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930s, he tried to prove that a living cell could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession:

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms. (Alexander I. Oparin, Origin of Life, Dover Publications, New York, 1936, 1953 (reprint), p. 196.)

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that **this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.** ("New Evidence on Evolution of Early Atmosphere and Life," *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, vol 63, November 1982, 1328-1330)

After a long silence, **Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.** (Stanley Miller, *Molecular Evolution of Life: Current Status of the Prebiotic Synthesis of Small Molecules*, 1986, p. 7)

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth* magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth? (Jeffrey Bada, Earth, February 1998, p. 40)

The complex structure of life

The primary reason why evolutionists ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms Darwinists deemed to be the simplest have outstandingly complex features. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. **Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, no single protein of the cell, let alone a living cell itself, can be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.**

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. However, there is no need to explain the situation with these details. Evolutionists are at a dead-end even before reaching the stage of the cell. That is because the probability of just a single protein, an essential building block of the cell, coming into being by chance is mathematically "0."

The main reason for this is the need for other proteins to be present if one protein is to form, and this completely eradicates the possibility of chance formation. This fact by itself is sufficient to eliminate the evolutionist claim of chance right from the outset. To summarize,

- 1. Protein cannot be synthesized without enzymes, and enzymes are all proteins.**
- 2. Around 100 proteins need to be present in order for a single protein to be synthesized. There therefore need to be proteins for proteins to exist.**
- 3. DNA manufactures the protein-synthesizing enzymes. Protein cannot be synthesized without DNA. DNA is therefore also needed in order for proteins to form.**

4. All the organelles in the cell have important tasks in protein synthesis. In other words, in order for proteins to form a perfect and fully functioning cell needs to exist together with all its organelles.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is a magnificent databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means. (Leslie E. Orgel, "The Origin of Life on Earth," Scientific American, vol. 271, October 1994, p. 78.)

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated spontaneously as a result of blind coincidences, then it has to be accepted that life was **created**. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny Creation.

Imaginary mechanisms of evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection." The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur. (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, The Modern Library, New York, p. 127)

Lamarck's impact

So, how could these "favourable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits

they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time. (Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species: A Facsimile of the First Edition*, Harvard University Press, 1964, p. 184.)

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory," or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930s. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings due to such external factors as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favourable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that Darwinists espouse, despite their own awareness of its scientific invalidity, is neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms (e.g., ears, eyes, lungs, and wings) underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: **Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they are always harmful.**

The reason for this is very simple: **DNA has a very complex structure, and random effects can only harm it.** The American geneticist B. G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

*First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, **if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.** (B. G. Ranganathan, *Origins?*, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1988, p. 7.)*

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living things, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer.) Of course, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself," as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that **there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature.** Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, no such imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

The fossil record: No sign of intermediate forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the unscientific supposition of this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains. (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species: A Facsimile of the First Edition, p. 179)

However, **Darwin was well aware that no fossils of these intermediate forms had yet been found.** He regarded this as a major difficulty for his theory. In one chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," he wrote:

Why, if species have descended from other species by insensibly fine gradations, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitional forms? Why is not all nature in confusion instead of the species being, as we see them, well defined?... But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?... Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, p. 172)

Darwin's hopes shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, **no transitional forms have yet been uncovered.** All of the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that **life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.**

One famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find – over and over again – not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another. (Derek A. Ager, "The Nature of the Fossil Record," Proceedings of the British Geological Association, vol 87, 1976, p. 133.)

This means that in **the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between.** This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that **all living things are created.** The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence. (Douglas J. Futuyma, Science on Trial, Pantheon Books, New York, 1983, p. 197)

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the Earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but Creation.

The tale of human evolution

The subject most often brought up by advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that man evolved from so-called ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started four to five million years ago, some "transitional forms" between man and his imaginary ancestors are supposed to have existed. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

1. *Australopithecus*
2. *Homo habilis*
3. *Homo erectus*
4. *Homo sapiens*

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors *Australopithecus*, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans. (Solly Zuckerman, *Beyond The Ivory Tower*, Toplinger Publications, New York, 1970, 75-14; Charles E. Oxnard, "The Place of Australopithecines in Human Evolution: Grounds for Doubt", *Nature*, vol 258, 389)

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than *Australopithecus*. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation." ("Could science be brought to an end by scientists' belief that they have final answers or by society's reluctance to pay the bills?" *Scientific American*, December 1992, p. 20)

By outlining the link chain as *Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of

paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time. (Alan Walker, *Science*, vol. 207, 7 March 1980, p. 1103; A. J. Kelso, *Physical Anthropology*, 1st ed., J. B. Lipincott Co., New York, 1970, p. 221; M. D. Leakey, *Olduvai Gorge*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971, p. 272.)

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. ***Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (man) co-existed in the same region.** (Jeffrey Kluger, "Not So Extinct After All: The Primitive Homo Erectus May Have Survived Long Enough To Coexist With Modern Humans," *Time*, 23 December 1996)

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. The late Stephen Jay Gould explained this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he was himself one of the leading advocates of evolution in the twentieth century:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth. (S. J. Gould, Natural History, vol. 85, 1976, p. 30)

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is "upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but **a tale with no scientific foundation.**

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years and studied *Australopithecus* fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, **that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.**

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"—concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense—and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible – and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time. (Solly Zuckerman, Beyond the Ivory Tower, p. 19)

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Darwinian formula!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now for once, examine what kind of a superstition the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution asserts that life is formed by chance. According to this irrational claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us think about that. When we bring together the elements that are the building-blocks of life such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium, only a heap is formed. No

matter what treatments it undergoes, this atomic heap cannot form even a single living being. If you like, let us formulate an "experiment" on this subject and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without pronouncing loudly under the name "Darwinian formula":

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids and as many proteins - a single one of which can by no means form by chance - as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a human's formation. **No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope.** They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, **unconscious atoms cannot form the cell** by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. **Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with God's superior creation.**

The theory of evolution, which claims the opposite, is a total fallacy completely contrary to reason. Thinking even a little bit on the claims of evolutionists discloses this reality, just as in the above example.

Technology in the eye and the ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of how we see. Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the eye's retina. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision." These electric signals are perceived in this center as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose.

Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all of its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than **the eye could not have been formed by chance**, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, **the brain is insulated from sound** just as it is from light. It does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In **your completely silent brain, you listen to symphonies, and hear all of the noises in a crowded place**. However, were the sound level in your brain measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since **the creation of man**.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

To whom does the consciousness that sees and hears within the brain belong?

Who watches an alluring world in the brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electro-chemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? **There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose.** To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions.

For **this consciousness is the spirit created by God**, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty God, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A materialist faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that **the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings**. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that **the required intermediate forms have never existed**. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered universe model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against it as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are **blindly devoted** to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine [intervention]...(Richard Lewontin, "The Demon-Haunted World," The New York Review of Books, January 9, 1997, p. 28)

These are explicit statements that **Darwinism is a dogma** kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter brought life into being. It insists that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to ignorantly defend it just so as not to acknowledge, in their own eyes, the evident existence of God.

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice sees this evident truth: **All living beings are works of a Creator**, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise, and All-

Knowing. **This Creator is God**, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The theory of evolution: The most potent spell in the world

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically, and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or some among the people of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, God has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verses, He reveals that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. God has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara, 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf, 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Surat al-Hijr, 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, in the Qur'an God relates the incident of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told the Prophet Moses (pbuh) to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Moses (pbuh) did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Surat al-A'raf, 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as revealed in the verse:

We revealed to Moses: "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A'raf, 117-118)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge, who was an atheist defending evolution for some sixty years, but who subsequently realized the truth, reveals the position in which the theory of evolution would find itself in the near future in these terms:

*I myself am convinced that **the theory of evolution**, especially the extent to which it's been applied, **will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future**. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has. (Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, p. 43)*

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on **the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world**. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

They said "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." (Qur'an, 2:32)

RESİM ALTI YAZILARI

s.32

Yemen was divided into 21 governorates. In 2013, the archipelago of Socotra, which was previously a part of Hadramaut, became the 22nd governorate. Socotra Governorate can be seen in the bottom right corner of the map. The governorates are subdivided into 333 districts, 2,210 sub-districts and 38,234 villages (2001).

SAUDI ARABIA

YEMEN

ARABIAN SEA

1. Sa'dah
2. Al Jawf
3. Hadramaut
4. Al Mahrah
5. Hajjah
6. 'Amran
7. Al Mahwit
8. Amanat Al Asimah (Sana'a)
9. Sana'a
10. Ma'rib
11. Al Hudaybah
12. Raymah
13. Dhamar
14. Ibb
15. Dhale
16. Al Bayda
17. Shabwah
18. Taiz
19. Lahij
20. Abyan

21. Aden

22. Socotra

s.56

What reason could you have for not fighting in the Way of God - for those men, women and children who are oppressed... (Surat an-Nisa', 75)

s.57

... and say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city whose inhabitants are wrongdoers! Give us a protector from You! Give us a helper from You!"? (Surat an-Nisa', 75)

s.64

A suicidal attack in Yemen: 100 people killed

Daily Türkiye, 22.05.2012

Yemen's cry for help

Daily Star, 06.04.2011

s.65

The specter of civil war in Yemen

Daily Taraf, 28.05.2011

A bloody attack at a parade rehearsal: at least 100 people killed

Daily Yeni Akit, 22.05.2012

Yemen's capital: a blood bath

Daily Cumhuriyet, 22.05.2012

Tragic death toll in Yemen: 360 people

Daily Milli Gazete, 22.05.2011

s.66

In Islam there is by no means any room for terrorism. On the contrary, according to Islam "terror" is a great crime and it is incumbent upon Muslims to prevent these acts and instead bring about peace and justice to the world.

s.73

Truly your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful. (Surat ash-Shu'ara', 9)

s.77

UN: More than half a million people in Yemen left their homes

Daily Zaman, 21.05.2015

UN: 100 thousand people displaced in 3 weeks in Yemen

Daily Zaman, 08.04.2015

s.91

Militants executed as a result of a political investigation in Yemen... It is impossible to enforce justice in an environment that does not confirm to the moral code of the Qur'an. Inhumanly violent methods cannot create the environment of love, respect and compassion that we crave.

s.102

(They are) those who perform the prayer and pay the alms and are certain about the hereafter. (Surat an-Naml, 3)

s.107

The Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen)

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen)

North and South Yemen were united on 22 May, 1990. In the following two and a half years until the 1993 elections, the first after the unification, the two parties governed Yemen jointly.

THE DIFFERENT IDENTITIES AND GROUPS IN YEMEN

Southern Movement

The Southern Movement was opposed to the unification of Yemen in 1990 and aims to revive the former South Yemen. The Southern Movement brought many people out into the streets in cities in Southern Yemen such as Aden.

Houthis and Ansar Allah

This group was founded by a group of young men who called themselves "The Believing Youth." The movement began in 1992, and is supported by the Shiite Zaidiyyah tribes of Yemen, who comprise one in five of the population.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

It has been one of the most active Islamic groups for many years. The group has committed many deadly attacks against the Yemeni security forces.

Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi

He was chosen as the president for a transitional period in 2012. Following the seizure of Hadi's presidential palace in Sana'a by the Houthis, Hadi moved to Aden.

The Islaah Movement

It combines tribal and Islamic interests. It spread all over Yemen, and had gained a lot of influence during the transition period. However, much of this power was lost with the rise of the Houthis.

Ali Abdullah Saleh

President of North Yemen from 1978 to 1990; and first President of Yemen. He was forced to leave public office in 2011 by means of public demonstrations, yet he remained in office until 2012.

s.117

Yemenis supporting peaceful change

Daily Yeni Asya, 09.03.2011

Only education can prevent the mentality based on superstition from spreading savagery, enmity and lovelessness across the entire Islamic world and turning people away from the true faith en masse.

s.118

If a lasting peace is desired in Yemen, the way to achieve this is through setting out the correct conception of the faith and eliminating the false one. Every Zaidi and Sunni who advocates a moderate concept of religion has major responsibilities in that regard.

s.122

YEMEN

DATA AND FIGURES FROM THE CRISIS IN YEMEN

POPULATION

23.8 million

The poorest country in the Middle East

YEMEN

Income per capita: US\$1270

50% of the population is living on the breadline.

In Oman, it is US\$19,450

s.123

10 million people suffer from nutritional problems.

47% of children under the age of 5 are underdeveloped.

60% are permanently malnourished.

14.7m

14.7 million people are waiting for humanitarian aid.

Yemen imports 90% of its food.

Water supplies in the cities are not expected to last more than 10-15 years.

Yemen has the most serious water problems in the world.

13 million people are living without water and hygiene.

s.127

It should be made possible for Houthis, Sunnis, Zaidis and all other groups with different views to put forth a shared will together and the problems within the fabric of society should urgently be solved, otherwise it would not be possible to bring lasting solutions to the problems of the country.

s.128

The running of the country's internal affairs being in the hands of external powers has destroyed internal peace and social order in Yemen.

s.129

Yemen has been taken over

Daily Star, 23.10.2014

s.130

Yemeni dictator becomes isolated

Daily Yeni Akit, 22.03.2011

Bloody clashes during the Houthi revolt

Daily Star, 07.09.2014

33 years reign of Saleh is over

Daily Yeni Akit, 28.02.2012

It is beyond doubt that Yemen is in need of reconstruction and this reconstruction can only be made possible with love.

Coup on Saleh

Daily Habertürk, 22.01.2015

s.131

Mortar attack on the President during prayer

Daily Habertürk, 04.06.2011

Houthis continue to advance in Yemen. Civil war is imminent.

Daily Zaman, 23.04.2015

It is absolutely essential that the state find a solution for a situation where people who live within the same country, speak the same language and have the same religion are leveling their guns at each other. Feelings such as hatred, spite and animosity must be replaced with a spirit of love, brotherhood, friendship and unity.

Shiite Houthis in Yemen seize the Presidential palace

Daily Zaman, 21.05.2015

The palace is besieged

Daily Vatan, 20.01.2015

Yemeni President "under house arrest"

Daily Milliyet, 22.01.2015

s.139

In a society made up of Yemeni people living by the Qur'anic morality, peace will come automatically.

s.141

Population of Yemen

25.4 million

% 35

% 65

Shi'a (Zaidi and Ismaili)

Sunnis

s.145

Yemen's army

s.148

Domestic peace is essential for a prosperous state that can look with confidence to the future of Yemen.

s.151

Lack of material means and security problems, interrupted transportation and the inability to provide adequate classes in schools mean that education is disrupted in many areas.

s.153

It is children who are paying the price in Yemen

Daily Habertürk, 24.04.2015

234 children died in 2 months in Yemen

Daily Habertürk, 13.03.2015

Yemeni children are starving

Daily Yeni Asya, 10.09.2012

s.155

The establishment of domestic peace will improve the quality of education, thus giving rise to high-quality people.

s.156

The believers are brothers, so make peace between your brothers and have fear of God so that hopefully you will gain mercy. (Surat al-Hujurat, 10)

s.161

The only salvation for the nation is to preserve social integrity and to take certain self-sacrificing steps to build a spirit of unity and togetherness.

s.163

We hope that Yemen will soon unite in love and brotherhood, that it will thus achieve the peace and security it deserves and that it will begin to take sound and determined steps in the transition to democracy.

s.164

Yemen's traditional clothes

s.169

Regional and global powers are making various calculations regarding Yemen, and that has condemned the country to many years of instability.

s.170

The sounds of civil war in Yemen

Daily Yeni Asya, 27.05.2011

42 deaths in Yemen's Friday massacre

Daily Taraf, 19.03.2011

The two sides in the streets of Yemen

Daily Zaman, 04.02.2011

Yemen remains unsettled

Daily Zaman, 18.02.2011

The specter of civil war in Yemen

Daily Taraf, 28.05.2011

s.171

All groups flood into the street. Yemen is on the brink of disintegration.

Daily Zaman, 25.01.2015

The threat of civil war grows in Yemen

Daily Zaman, 01.06.2011

A State of Emergency in Yemen

Daily Yeni Asya, 24.03.2011

A massacre of the Yemeni military during a ceremony

Daily Habertürk, 22.05.2012

A suicidal attack in Yemen: at least 37 people killed

Daily Zaman, 08.01.2015

After a spirit of unity has been established, it will be easier to ensure the development of social peace and stability.

Violence flares in Yemen

Daily Zaman, 23.09.2011

s.179

All the political and ethnical groups in Yemen must realize that the way to strength, as Almighty God says in the Qur'an, is not through division but through unity.

s.181

Obey God and His Messenger and do not quarrel among yourselves lest you lose heart and your momentum disappear. And be steadfast. God is with the steadfast. (Surat al-Anfal, 46)

s.183

Muslims must support one another in alliance and be compassionate and understanding, even when they disagree.

s.184

All Muslims in Yemen should greet and talk to one another. They must be tolerant of one another. Sectarian or tribal disagreements must come to an end. And all Muslims must work together, in humility, to draw closer to God and perform greater service for His faith.

s.190

Demonstrations spread in Libya

Daily Zaman, 18.02.2011

Protestors in Bahrain set up camp in the capital

Daily Ortadoğu, 17.02.2011

Pearl Roundabout in Bahrain is taken over by the opposition

Daily Ortadoğu, 20.02.2011

The storm of change in the Middle East

Daily Yeni Asya, 17.02.2011

s.191

The moment that Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh), who will be the spiritual leader of Muslims, arises is approaching.

Tensions rise between Sunnis and Shias

Daily Habertürk, 27.03.2015

s.198

Tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran rekindled 1400 years of sectarian conflict

Daily Sözcü, 05.01.2016

Saudi "storm" in Yemen. Middle East is like a powder keg

Daily Zaman, 27.03.2015

The tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the danger of a sectarian war
Ahaber., 02.01.2016

Rising tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran
Daily Sabah, 06.01.2016

s.199

The claim that Saudi Arabia lowers oil prices to cause the fall of Iran
Daily Hürriyet, 04.01.2016

How does Tehran view the Iran-Saudi Arabia crisis?
Aljazeera. Turk, 08.01.2016

A call from the USA to Saudi Arabia and Iran
Daily Sabah, 04.01.2016

A democratic assembly in which Sunnis and Shias are justly represented and a national reconciliation government will be an important step in attaining peace and stability in Yemen.

s.201

Be they Zaidi or Sunni, all Muslims in Yemen should aim to adopt the beautiful morality God commands, to live by the religion the way God teaches us and to spread brotherhood.

s.202

OPERATION DECISIVE STORM

An operation was launched against the Houthi insurrection in Yemen by Saudi Arabia, spearheading a coalition of nine states. Countries of the Gulf, with the exception of Oman, provided military support. The countries in the coalition are generally comprised of Sunni Muslims, and aim to help the deposed Yemeni government, which still has a powerful Sunni support.

A large number of innocent civilians' lives are put in danger as a result of the operation.

However, it is very difficult to ensure peace in Yemen by military means because even if the Houthi militants lay down their weapons, the Zaidis will continue to live in the country and the devastation brought by the war will hurt not only the Zaidis of Yemen, but also its Sunni citizens.

Be they Zaidi or Sunni, all Muslims in Yemen should aim to adopt the beautiful morality God commands and to live and spread the religion the way God teaches us. And no doubt, when people

live by the morality God commands, the long-awaited peaceful atmosphere of democracy can be achieved in Yemen.

SAUDI ARABIA

Yemeni airspace has been declared a "restricted zone" due to the air strikes ordered by the Saudi King, Salman bin Abdulaziz. These air strikes has lead to the elimination of several Houthi leaders.

The Saudi Minister for Defense warned Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the son of the previous President of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, that they would advance on Aden. In order to keep Yemen under their control, the Houthis joined forces with the supporters of Saleh.

Jordan

Provided support with 6 warplanes

Morocco

Egypt

Libya

Algeria

Morocco

Provided support with 6 warplanes

Nigeria

Sudan

Egypt

Provided support with 4 warships and air support (Comprised air and sea units of the operation)

Sudan

Provided support with 3 warplanes

s.203

Under Houthi control

Under State control

Under Al-Qaeda control

Under State and Al-Qaeda control

Under State, Houthi and Al-Qaeda control

Kuwait

Provided support with 15 jets

Pakistan

Provided sea and air support

Turkey

USA

President Obama approved providing logistical and intelligence support to the Coalition of Gulf States' military operation against the Houthis.

Adel al-Jubeir, the then Saudi Ambassador to the United States, announced the launch by the Kingdom of a military operation against Houthi militants in the south of Aden. Al-Jubeir said the 10-country coalition launched the campaign "to protect and defend the legitimate government" of Hadi.

Syria

Iraq

Iran

Pakistan

Saudi Arabia

Bahrain

Provided support with 15 warplanes

Qatar

Provided support with 10 warplanes

YEMEN

UAE

Provided support with 30 warplanes

Saudi Arabia

Provided support with 100 warplanes, 150,000 troops and other naval forces

s.211

What Yemeni Muslims must do is to espouse and encourage peace. The first priority in doing that is for the sides to employ only the language of love. The Qur'an, the fundamental source of Islam, emphasizes the concepts of love, affection, compassion, humility, self-sacrifice and peace.

s.213

A bombed hospital in Yemen

s.217

The command "Thou shalt not kill" that appears in both the Gospel and the Torah also appears in the Qur'an. God has told Muslims that killing one person is equivalent to killing all of mankind.

s.218

They say it's over, yet still attack

Daily Vatan, 23.04.2015

Saudi jets attack a Yemeni market place

Daily Zaman, 06.07.2015

Yemen's bloodiest day: 176 dead

Daily Zaman, 08.07.2015

s.219

Saudi missiles attack a world heritage site

Daily Habertürk, 14.06.2015

ISIS attacked mosques in Yemen: 137 dead, 350 wounded

Daily Zaman, 21.03.2015

Friday massacre: 142 dead

Daily Habertürk, 21.03.2015

The abominable attack on mosques in Yemen: 137 dead, 350 wounded

Daily Zaman, 21.03.2015

s.222

Life conditions deteriorate every day in Yemen as people struggle with severe hunger.

s.224

Imminent humanitarian crisis in Yemen, and an urgent call from the UN for aid

Daily Zaman, 18.04.2015

UN: 1.6 billion dollars is urgently required for Yemen's humanitarian crisis

Daily Zaman, 20.06.2015

50 tons of aid sent to Yemen from the UN

Daily Vatan, 17.05.2015

Disaster alarm in Yemen

Daily Star, 21.08.2015

s.225

Air strikes hamper aid efforts in Yemen

Daily Zaman, 05.04.2015

s.235

The only way of halting the fighting is for the Islamic world to establish unity based on permanent reconciliation within itself.

s.242

If a culture that regards differences with understanding, that uses its power and energy for the benefit of not only Muslims but all mankind and a culture that is conciliatory and peace-loving prevails among Muslims, then the Islamic world can build the greatest civilization of the 21st Century.

s.247

The drama playing out in Yemen is not limited to murder and slaughter alone. The UN says that 80% of the 20 million civilians in Yemen stand in need of aid, and describes this as a "catastrophe."

s.257

Those who are unbelievers are the friends and protectors of one another. If you do not act in this way (be friends and protectors of one another) there will be turmoil in the land and great corruption. (Surat al-Anfal, 73)

s.259

The famous Jabal Shaharah, noted for its arch bridge, in Yemen, which was under Ottoman rule for almost 401 years

s.265

One of the facts nullifying the theory of evolution is the astonishingly complex structure of life. The DNA molecule located in the nucleus of cells of living beings is an example of this. The DNA is a sort of databank formed of the arrangement of four different molecules in different sequences. This databank contains the codes of all the physical traits of that living being. When the human DNA is put into writing, it is calculated that this would result in an encyclopedia made up of 900 volumes. Unquestionably, such extraordinary information definitively refutes the concept of coincidence.

s.267

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, evolutionary biologists have sought examples of beneficial mutations by creating mutant flies. But these efforts have always resulted in sick and deformed creatures. The top picture shows the head of a normal fruit fly, and the picture on the left shows the head of a fruit fly with legs coming out of it, the result of mutation.

leg

antennae

eyes

mouth

s.269

This fossil crocodile from the Cretaceous period is 65 million years old. It is identical to crocodiles living today.

s.281

In the same way that the beliefs of people who worshipped crocodiles or natural phenomena now seem odd and unbelievable, so the beliefs of Darwinists are just as incredible. Darwinists ignorantly regard chance and lifeless, unconscious atoms as a so-called creative force, and are as devoted to that false belief as if to a religion.

ARKA KAPAK

The recent history of Yemen, one of the oldest civilizations in the world and described as “Happy Arabia” in ancient times, is filled with wars, coups and political instability. Internal disorder in the country is continuing relentlessly. Today Yemen only reminds people of civil war, suicide attacks, cities devastated by bombardment, hunger and poverty.

Each article in this book tells us of a side of Yemen that is full of anguish and suffering. While reading these lines, you will witness how tribalism, discrimination against women, and the narcotic herb called 'khat' have devastated the country at one time or another, and you will have the opportunity to acquaint yourselves with genuine suggestions that will help alleviate this devastation.

Throughout the book, what happens in Yemen is analyzed based on the tenets of the Qur'an and effective and exact solutions are offered accordingly.

One of our dearest wishes from Almighty God is the reign of peace over the entire world, and a peaceful and prosperous life for the Yemeni people as well as for all Muslims around the world as soon as possible. We do not want Yemen to remind us of suffering, conflict and dissension any more, but to remind us of a country that has achieved happiness, peace and solidarity within itself, and unity with all Muslims.

About the Author: Adnan Oktar, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on faith-related, scientific and political issues. He is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

All of the author's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies. His more than 300 works, translated into 76 different languages, enjoy a wide readership across the world.

By the will of Allah, the books of Harun Yahya will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.