

**Country/entity** Yemen

**Region** Middle East and North Africa

**Agreement name** Untitled Agreement [in Yarim, Ibb Governorate]

**Date** 21 Oct 2014

**Agreement status** Multiparty signed/agreed

**Interim arrangement** Yes

### **Yemeni Civil Wars (1994) (2011 - )**

The Republic of Yemen was formed in May 1990 after the merger between the Yemeni Arab Republic (YAR) in the north and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in the south. The unification process was rushed and the final agreement between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and President Ali Salem al-Beidh was based on the imperfect promise of equality. Following the merger, integration of the militaries and civil services was at best incomplete or at times entirely non-existent. When Saleh's General Congress Party (GPC) allied itself with the newly created Islamist Islah ('reform') party in 1993, the former ruling party of South Yemen – the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) – was effectively side-lined in the 1993 General Elections. Violence involving the use of heavy weaponry and aerial bombardment erupted in April 1994 and on the 21 May 1994 Vice President al-Beidh declared the secession of the south, citing political centralization with the northern highland tribes, violence against the YSP and economic discrimination. In the midst of fighting, negotiations in Cairo, Egypt, collapsed. The war ended with the military victory of the north, and on the 1 October 1994, Ali Abdullah Saleh was elected President.

Despite the unification of Yemen in 1990, political power during the 1990s and 2000s remained centralized with the northern highland tribes, particularly the villages from which President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his confidants stemmed. The system of clientelism established through the ruling General People's Congress party maintained relative loyalty among the fractured political allegiances of Yemen's traditional tribal leadership. However, diminishing oil reserves and the shrinking opportunities for access to rent increased economic and political marginalization in Yemen's peripheral communities. The degree of regionalism of conflicts is further defined by other local grievances. In the northern governorate of Sa'dah, a backlash was provoked among the local Zaydi Shi'a against Sunni Salafist cultural incursions resulting in six wars between 2004 and 2010. In the southern governorates of Hadramawt, Shabwa, al-Dhali and Abyan, civil and military personnel forcibly retired after the 1994 Civil War began protesting and eventually formed the secessionist Southern 'al-Hiraak' movement in 2007. Furthermore, tribal grievances have spurred attacks on oil companies and government installations to extract rents. Various takfiri groups including al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula have also increased their presence since 1995.

The Yemen Spring in early 2011 allowed all these movements to express their joint displeasure. Moreover, factionalism in the regime split the already weak military and thus allowed the Houthis, the takfiris and tribal-based militia known as popular committees, to assert themselves militarily. Mandated by the UN-sponsored Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, the National Dialogue held from March 2013 to January 2014 aimed at guaranteeing power-sharing among the different parties. However, the GCC Initiative only included formal political parties that did not accurately reflect political realities. Furthermore, provisions lacked adequate transitional justice and provided former-President Saleh, as well as others, full amnesty. As a result, little faith was placed in the process by formerly marginalized groups such as the Zaydi Shia Houthi rebels (Ansar Allah) and al-Hiraak who opted to increase their bargaining power vis-à-vis the state by strengthening their own territorial enclaves. In September 2014 the Houthis succeeded in capturing the capital Sana'a and gradually expanded their control southward. The subsequent UN-mediated Peace and National Partnership Agreement between transitional president Hadi and the Houthis on a federal, democratic Yemeni state, failed to be implemented as the Houthis successfully dissolved the parliament and deposed Hadi in January 2015. Following the Saudi military intervention to restore the Hadi government in March 2015, ceasefire attempts continuously failed. A two-year

<b>Stage</b>	Pre-negotiation/process
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Inter-group
<b>Peace process</b>	Yemen Inter-group Agreements
<b>Parties</b>	"meeting was held between sheikhs, dignitaries, representatives of political parties, local, military and security authorities, representatives of civil society and representatives of Ansar Allah and the Popular Committees"
<b>Third parties</b>	-
<b>Description</b>	Part of one of a series of agreements between the Houthis and local communities as they were expanding their territorial control in Yemen in 2014. Is arguably a form of surrender agreement on behalf of the local community.

**Agreement document** [YE\\_141023\\_Yarim Agreement\\_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

**Agreement document (original language)** [YE\\_141023\\_Yarim Agreement\\_AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

### Local agreement properties

**Process type** Formal structured process

**Rationale** This agreement reflects broader local practices of signing agreements with the Houthis to preserve local areas based on the recognition of public needs and preservation of the community and wider region. There is an increased level of formality to this agreement in comparison to other similar local examples at the time, with the signing meeting being attended and fully supported by an extensive range of societal actors and local civic bodies. The provisions set out are also clearer. The dedicated body of support includes religious representation, local political representation, a presence from the military and security apparatus of the region and broader civil society representation. This agreement also follows a local pattern of urgency in signing, as another example of an agreement between local groups and Ansar Allah being made shortly after an intense period of fighting; with a sudden reversal of clear anti-Houthi opposition or sentiment by the local group. In the week before this agreement there was intense fighting between the tribal groups of Yarim and Ansar Allah. A number of key tribal figures, some of whom were also sheikhs, had had their homes targeted. As this group is part of the body upholding the talks, in light of the context, this can be viewed as a strongly led tribal and religious non-state process.

**Is there a documented link to a national peace process?** T

**Link to national process: articulated rationale** None of the authorities mentioned in the text as supportive of the agreement signing meeting can be clearly identified as being affiliated to the state. The wider peace process is also not specifically mentioned in the text. There is also no further research which indicates a clear structural link to the national peace process.

**Name of Locale** Yarim area / city district, Ibb governorate

**Nature of Locale** Region

**GPS Lat/Long (DD)** 14.296654, 44.375410

**Participant type** Local state actor  
Local armed group  
Domestic religious organisation/leader or other elder  
Local community/civilian group(s)/civil society organisations

**Mediator, facilitator or similar** Mediator or similar referred to

**Mediator (references)** There is no clear reference to a mediator or actor playing a supporting role of any kind apart from the wording that the meeting was 'held' by all of the civic groups who attended, supported dialogue and signed.

**Type of mediator/facilitator/similar**

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## Local issues

**Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture)** Page 1, Untitled Preamble: In the name of God, most Gracious, most Compassionate  
Page 1, With God's assistance,

Page 1, God is the guardian of success [...].

**Grievance List** [Summary] (1) Presence of al-Qaeda; (2) freedom of thought; (3) Ensuring peace and development in the region and all parties condemning a party which attacks another.

**Cattle rustling/ banditry** No specific mention.

**Social cover** No specific mention.