



A CRISIS WITH NO END IN SIGHT

How the ongoing crisis in Taiz Governorate continues to put civilians at risk

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Despite a UN-brokered peace agreement in December 2018, the conflict in Yemen has run into its sixth year. In Taiz Governorate, civilians continue to bear the brunt of conflict. Every day, they face death or injury from indiscriminate attacks, gender-based violence in their homes and poor access to food, water and medical care. As people's resources are further exhausted, their safety, security and well-being are only likely to worsen. The COVID-19 pandemic has added an additional layer to the ongoing crisis. The people of Taiz – and across Yemen as a whole – desperately need a lasting and inclusive peace process to end the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

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For further information on the issues raised in this paper please email advocacy@oxfaminternational.org

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Cover photo: Rami with his wife Fatima in their shelter in a camp for displaced people in Taiz Governorate. The couple have been displaced since 2016, along with their six children. Photo credit: Pablo Tosco/Oxfam.

1 INTRODUCTION

For almost six years, civilians have borne the brunt of the conflict in Yemen. Active fighting continues, including airstrikes, shelling and ground fighting. All parties to the conflict have shown disregard for international humanitarian law (IHL), attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure including roads, medical centres and healthcare facilities, schools, factories, water and electricity infrastructure, farms, public marketplaces and civilian vehicles. Even settlements for internally displaced people (IDPs) have been hit.¹

December 2020 marks two years since the warring parties came together to sign the Stockholm Agreement, a UN-brokered accord that contained three parts:

1. The Hudaydah Agreement, which included a commitment to a ceasefire in the city of Hudaydah and the Red Sea ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ras Issa, as well as a 'mutual redeployment of forces';
2. A prisoner exchange agreement, aiming to release more than 15,000 prisoners and detainees in total; and
3. The Taiz Understanding, whereby the parties agreed to establish a joint committee to address the situation in Taiz, a city that has been effectively under siege since the conflict escalated in 2015.

Stockholm was the first time in over two years that the internationally recognized Yemeni government and the Ansar Allah leadership had met, and it represented an important window of opportunity for further discussion. However, two years on, the results of the peace talks are still only partially felt on the ground.

There has been some progress on the first two parts of the accord: a large-scale assault on the city of Hudaydah was avoided,² and in October 2020, more than 1,000 prisoners were released.³ However, there have been no concerted efforts made to advance implementation of the Taiz Understanding.⁴

In March 2020, the UN Secretary-General called upon the warring parties to commit to a nationwide ceasefire in Yemen to allow an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 51% of Yemen's health facilities are functioning, and the country has desperately low testing capacity, a total of only 700 intensive care beds, and just 500 ventilators for a population of over 30 million people. Regardless, violence continues on numerous frontlines, including in Hudaydah, Marib, al-Jawf, Taiz, al-Dhale'e, Abyan and parts of Sana'a.⁵

Throughout the conflict, protection of civilians has remained a major concern. Almost 4 million people have been forced to flee their homes, including over 166,000 in 2020.⁶ Many have experienced multiple waves of displacement due to shifting frontlines or heavy rains and flooding that have destroyed their makeshift shelters. Women, men, girls and boys in Yemen – particularly those who have been displaced or are members of marginalized groups such as the *Muhamasheen*⁷ – have faced huge risks to their safety, security and well-being. A lack of access to services has further undermined their protection and

led them to adopt negative coping mechanisms to survive.

Humanitarian actors in Yemen continue to encounter significant challenges, amid increasing dependence on humanitarian aid as the only lifeline for millions of people. Protection services, including shelters for survivors of gender-based violence, are often prohibited by the authorities, while severe funding shortages have led to the closure of life-saving assistance. For instance, the number of community centres providing protection services – including for survivors of gender-based violence and sexual abuse – has fallen from 37 in 2019 to only 19 in 2020 due to lack of funds.⁸

There are few other places in Yemen where the conflict has so dramatically affected the lives of ordinary Yemenis than Taiz Governorate. Taiz city, the governorate's capital, has been at the centre of some of the most intense fighting Yemen has seen, primarily between Ansar Allah, which controls much of northern Yemen, and the internationally recognized government backed by a Saudi- and UAE-led coalition.



Source: Oxfam.

This briefing note outlines some of the main protection concerns facing IDPs and host communities in Taiz Governorate. It is based on six focus group discussions (FGDs) with members of Oxfam's community-based protection networks (CBPNs) from a total of 18 IDP and host communities. The meetings were held with separate groups of men and women in two locations in Taiz governorate in October 2020. Individual interviews were also carried out with staff from 10 local humanitarian organizations based in Taiz.

The findings paint a grim picture. People explained how they no longer feel safe and are unable to access the basic services they need to survive, including food, clean water and healthcare. Many have been displaced more than once over the past six years, and the ongoing conflict has had a devastating impact on their health and well-being. Many of the indirect consequences of the conflict – including a shortage of services, lack of livelihood opportunities, and tensions between communities that have been thrown together and must share limited resources – are also increasing people's sense of insecurity and leading them to take desperate measures that often present their own risks.

Box 1: Oxfam's approach to community-based protection

Oxfam's protection programmes in Yemen take a community-based approach, working with CBPNs in order to support communities in a sustainable way. Our approach is founded on the principle that communities should take complete ownership of all initiatives. Thus, while trained and supported by Oxfam to prioritize and respond to issues, members take the lead at every stage. As a result, communities are better able to understand and define their own needs. Additionally, community ownership means that many of the protection structures will remain in place after Oxfam's involvement has ended.

Championing equality between women and men, CBPNs provide vital forums for everyone to discuss issues affecting them on equal terms. By encouraging more women to participate, they provide a rare opportunity to enter the public sphere and directly address the protection threats that particularly affect women and girls.



A group of women with their children stand among their tents in a camp for displaced people in Taiz Governorate. Photo credit: Pablo Tosco/Oxfam.

2 CIVILIANS ON THE FRONTLINES

Over 3 million people live in Taiz Governorate – around 11.3% of the country's population.⁹ Since the escalation of the conflict in 2015, Taiz – and in particular Taiz city, the governorate's capital – has been a hotspot for fighting, and violations of IHL have been documented on the part of all parties to the conflict. Ongoing hostilities in and around the city of Taiz, including in residential areas, have seen protracted exchanges of heavy artillery fire, as well as indiscriminate shelling, sniper fire, missile attacks, the use of landmines and airstrikes.¹⁰

Taiz Governorate has suffered the worst civilian death toll in relative terms, with 2,300 killed since the conflict escalated. This accounts for 19% of the 12,000 civilian conflict fatalities reported in Yemen between 2015 and 2019.¹¹ Between April and September 2020, there were 226 civilian casualties directly resulting from the conflict in Taiz.¹² Taiz also has the highest number of land mines recorded in Yemen. Between 2015 and 2019, they have caused injury and disability to around 1,040 people in Taiz. Some 160 of Yemen's 685 landmine deaths between 2015 and 2019 happened in Taiz Governorate.¹³ Taiz also has the highest number of people who have been injured or disabled as a result of mines, with 134 casualties, and the largest number of mine-damaged houses (70).¹⁴

The heavy exchanges that have marked hostilities in and around Taiz since the escalation of the conflict, including intensive airstrikes and shelling, have destroyed civilian property, infrastructure and livelihoods. Between January 2019 and September 2020, 209 civilian houses, 16 vehicles, 13 farms, 18 businesses and a water facility were damaged or destroyed in Taiz as a direct result of the conflict. Three public markets and an IDP camp were also hit.¹⁵

In 2019, seven health facilities were targeted, affecting access to medical care for 32,589 households, while attacks on four education facilities affected over a thousand households.¹⁶

Hostilities have also been marked by severe constraints on humanitarian access and civilians' freedom of movement. The de facto authorities in the northern parts of the country have imposed a near siege-like state on Taiz city since 2015,¹⁷ despite the commitments in the Stockholm Agreement. Access to and within the city has been a major challenge for civilians as well as to humanitarian organizations, undermining the latter's ability to deliver aid to affected communities. Direct roads and humanitarian corridors into the city continue to be closed from the north, forcing civilians to take long detours to access basic services.

'We used to be horrified by the sound and feel of falling airstrikes, shells or rockets close to us, especially the children. We would rush to the basement – the safest place in the house when shells fall.'

Key informant interview, Taiz city

The closure of the main road connecting Al-Houban district with Taiz city in 2015 separated the eastern parts of the city from its central and western parts. This road was the main lifeline and safe passage for civilians and supplies in and out of the city. Since its closure in 2015, access to the city has only been

allowed through one checkpoint controlled by Ansar Allah, who limit the amount of goods that can be brought in to the city. As a result, civilians and supplies travel on unpaved and narrow roads through valleys and mountains, multiple checkpoints and areas in conflict. This puts drivers and passengers in danger, as well as forcing them to undertake extremely long and expensive journeys. During intense fighting, civilians depend on donkeys and camels to transport food and medicines on mountain trails.¹⁸



A vehicle in a camp for displaced persons in Taiz Governorate, just half an hour from the conflict front line. Photo credit: Pablo Tosco/Oxfam.

3 UNPROTECTED BEYOND THE LINE OF FIRE

While the fighting continues in and around Taiz city, and while civilians continue to be caught in the crossfire, a quieter crisis is unfolding in the surrounding areas of Taiz Governorate. Most of the CBPN members that Oxfam spoke to during the research for this paper had been displaced from areas of active fighting – including Taiz city, but also Mawza'a, Al-Kadah, Gabal Habshi and Al Wazi'iah. On the whole, they told us that their communities are now free of the worst of the dangers caused by the fighting. Beyond the frontlines, however, risks to their safety continue to manifest in different ways.

THE DANGERS OF DISPLACEMENT

Displacement presents huge threats to physical safety, personal security, family stability and individual well-being, including:

- family separation;
- loss of livelihoods;
- loss of physical safety, security and privacy in IDP sites;
- exposure to harassment, discrimination and violence, including gender-based violence.

Other vulnerabilities are intensified by the poor living conditions in the camps or houses where IDPs are hosted. These are often not fit for purpose, and people find their dignity undermined, freedom of movement constrained and access to services limited.

Over half of the CBPN respondents who had been displaced due to the conflict said their journeys of displacement, and those of their communities, had involved considerable obstacles. Many had fled from Taiz city with their families. They struggled to find or afford transport, taking whatever they could carry and walking unimaginable distances to escape. Some of their journeys involved hours of detention at checkpoints because they had lost legal documents. Several FGD participants said that families were separated during their journeys, and as a result of their lack of legal documents – along with a lack of income and ongoing security challenges – they still have not been reunited five years later.

One mother, who was displaced by the fighting, told us during an interview that she has not seen two of her sons or her grandson since 2015: 'We got separated on the way when they decided to head to Al-Houban district to check work opportunities, and they couldn't leave. I desperately want to see my two sons and my grandson. But the road is closed and I can't afford the cost of transportation to go the long way round. We are only able to communicate from time to time over the phone.'

Despite having escaped the worst of the fighting, IDPs often face new protection threats in the areas where they settle. All FGD participants from IDP communities highlighted tensions with host communities around scarce resources such as firewood and water, which often mean that displaced communities struggle to access such resources. In some cases, participants told Oxfam that they have been forced to adopt extreme coping strategies – including drinking from unclean water sources, thus increasing the risk of cholera and other waterborne diseases, and burning plastic instead of firewood for cooking.

Two CBPN members from two different IDP settlements said that their communities face constant harassment and intimidation aimed at pushing them to evacuate the area. Many landowners are increasingly unwilling to host IDPs, due to the rising scarcity of resources and the fear that there is no clear end to the conflict in sight – so they may see people living on their land for many more years to come.

One NGO worker told us the host community they work with has seen a growing influx of IDPs since the beginning of 2020, adding to the hundreds of IDP households they have hosted over the past five years. With little extra support, tensions over resources are escalating. Other IDPs have been using public school buildings as shelter for over five years, and have been told by local authorities to evacuate the school and look for another place to stay. Over a third of the FGD respondents told us that their communities wanted to relocate due to harassment by the host community; however, they have concerns about being further from markets, schools and health centres.

‘Our children are harassed by the local community, who tell them that they have “occupied” the school that we are staying in. But we have nowhere else to go.’

Focus group participant, woman

Box 2: Mohamed’s story

Mohamed, a 50-year-old widower, recently fled his home in Taiz city because of the ongoing fighting. When his eldest daughter’s husband was killed as a result of the shelling, Mohamed decided to take his four children, along with his grandchildren (the youngest of whom is just six months old), and flee to safety in Ash Shamayteen district, south of Taiz city.

Yet when he reached the Ash Shamayteen, Mohamed realized that though his family was safe from the conflict, their worries were far from over. They are currently staying in the courtyard of a school that is hosting around 35 *Muhamasheen* families. The school is no longer functioning, and the site is overcrowded with tents. The site has only one working latrine, which is reserved for women. Men relieve themselves out in the open, behind the tents, putting the residents of the site at great risk of cholera and other diseases. When it rains, the ground turns into an open sewer and the dirty water floods people’s tents.

‘We don’t have anything – no cooking tools, no blankets. We left everything behind. And here, there’s no space for us. We are living in someone else’s tent at the moment, but we are 10 in the tent and they want us to leave because it’s overcrowded. But there aren’t any other tents for us.’

Water is only provided to the camp every four days, and sometimes there are delays, so they fetch water from a nearby well. But the water isn’t clean, and Mohamed – who has to choose between giving his family water or going for days without washing or drinking – is worried that they will fall ill. With no healthcare in the area, this is something that he would not be able to afford.

‘We need help with everything. There’s nowhere else for us to go, but right now we’re in this place with no food, no toilets, no healthcare, no blankets and hardly any water. I was working back in Taiz, but now I can’t find work. And they say that they want to move the camp, but then we will be far from the market and people won’t even be able to beg for scraps of food. I thank God that we’re safe now, but I’m worried about what will happen to my family in these conditions.’

LACK OF ACCESS TO SERVICES

Access to basic services such as healthcare is a major concern for the people living in Taiz. The siege-like conditions have for years meant that residents of Taiz city have felt this most acutely, but across the governorate people struggle to access basic services and goods – either because they no longer exist, or because insecurity makes it difficult to reach them.

All respondents, from both IDP and host communities, highlighted the limited

health facilities and poor medical services in their areas, and the high costs or unavailability of specific services or medicines for conditions including diabetes and respiratory and heart diseases. Some respondents said a few NGOs are providing basic medical services, but nothing that meets the specific needs of people with chronic diseases. However, in the absence of functioning state-run health services, these NGOs are the only providers of healthcare for most of the population. Thus, accessing specialized treatment often means paying high fees or making the long trip to Sana'a, which most people cannot afford on top of the cost of their medical care. Even when they can afford the journey, it means a long and arduous drive along bumpy dirt roads, crossing numerous armed checkpoints.

Many people in their communities have given up seeking medical care altogether, while several critical cases in need of immediate treatment have been left to suffer – sometimes for days – before they can afford or find means of transportation. One NGO worker mentioned the lack of public transport and ambulance services in areas where IDPs are located, putting critical cases at high risk of long-term harm or death. Some community members told Oxfam that they had carried sick relatives on their backs for over an hour to reach a health centre, because the roads from their village are impassable by vehicle. Others said their lack of income prevents them from accessing healthcare even in emergencies.

According to FDG participants, host communities often view IDPs as a source of disease, and thus frequently deny them treatment. One FGD participant told us that an IDP woman who took her newborn to hospital, worried that he was suffering from malnutrition, was denied treatment and told there was nothing wrong. Her son died hours later in her arms.

For girls and boys alike, access to education is another major concern. The vast majority of IDP respondents told us that their children – and the children of the members of their community – are unable to attend school. Reasons include the inability to afford the costs of schooling,¹⁹ and the fact that many children are forced to drop out of school to help earn money through farm work, cleaning, collecting solid waste for recycling or begging. Boys and girls from *Muhamasheen* communities tend to face particular discrimination in schools due to their social status, and CBPN members told us that their children had been bullied out of school – by fellow students and teachers alike.

IDP community representatives in CBPNs frequently raised the long distances that women, girls and boys walk to fetch water. FGD participants told Oxfam that the journey from IDP settlements to the nearest water source can take between an hour and four hours. Women, girls and boys face harassment and abuse along the way and at checkpoints. Most of the women we spoke to told us that women and girls frequently also face domestic violence if they return late. This is a common occurrence, as they are obliged to queue for long periods before walking back with 20L jerrycans of water.

Box 3: Najla's story

When conflict erupted in Taiz city almost six years ago, Najla – a 44-year old widow and mother to five children – was forced to take her family and flee, along with thousands of other people.

'We used to live a happy life. My children went to school in the city, and my family and my husband's family lived close to us. But when fighting started we were terrified by the shelling and the sounds of gunfire. When a shell fire fell on the house next to us, I knew that we had to leave our home and leave everything behind.'

Najla and her family walked from Taiz city until they eventually reached Al-Ma'afer district. She and her children have been sleeping in a small tent for almost six years now. Najla told Oxfam that she struggled to ensure that her children have enough to eat every day. 'Sometimes we don't find enough to eat, so I eat less to make sure they have had enough; I always skip meals.' However, despite these sacrifices, all three of Najla's sons have had to drop out of school to support her by collecting and selling plastic bottles. The family earns a few hundred Riyal each day, the equivalent of less than \$1.

'I couldn't afford our living expenses, let alone the fees for their schooling, so I had no option but to allow my sons to work. I know how important education is and I want my children to have a bright future – who doesn't? But the war means that we don't have the money for a decent meal, or to buy medicine when one of us gets sick. There's nothing else we can do.'

POVERTY AS A SOURCE OF INSECURITY

People's ability to cope with a series of conflict-imposed crises has been exhausted after almost six years of war. Yemen was already the poorest country in the Middle East even before the conflict escalated, and the steep economic decline in recent years has meant a further deterioration in living conditions.²⁰ Of particular concern is that food prices have more than doubled compared to pre-conflict levels.²¹ Since the beginning of 2020, they have risen dramatically, mainly as a result of the depreciation of the currency, particularly in the southern parts of Yemen; the fuel crisis in the northern parts has also further worsened humanitarian conditions.²²

All respondents spoke of their inability to earn a living for their families. Several FGD participants told us that it was common for households in their communities to have only one adult supporting them, following the death or injury of their spouse as a result of the conflict, and that many of these heads of household found it difficult to support their families singlehandedly. This was a particular challenge for women, who often find themselves the sole breadwinners for their family for the first time – in a context where it can be challenging for women to find employment in all but a limited number of sectors.²³

The increase in tensions within families, due to frustrations for lack of income and loss of livelihoods, is often manifested through a rise in domestic violence,²⁴ with women and girls particularly vulnerable as a result.

Also deeply concerning were the frequent mentions of child marriage. Participants mainly linked the risk of child marriage to poverty and insecurity: families use the dowry to buy food and other essentials, while marrying off a daughter is perceived to provide her with some kind of protection. During one discussion, CBPN members told us that girls as young as 12 were habitually being married off to much older men.

STIGMATIZATION OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS

While the years of conflict have affected conditions for millions across Yemen, some segments of the population – including *Muhamasheen* communities – have been subject to stigmatization and discrimination for many decades.²⁵ Taiz Governorate has one of the largest *Muhamasheen* communities in Yemen; women and girls in particular have been exposed to gender-based violence, including sexual abuse and harassment by armed men – especially at checkpoints.²⁶

All IDP participants highlighted sexual harassment as a key protection threat, mainly against women and girls, indicating that women and girls who are not accompanied by a male family member are at most risk. Several women members of CBPNs, for instance, referred to incidents of sexual abuse of *Muhamasheen* girls at armed checkpoints. Due to the lack of a functioning legal system, as well as their marginalized status, the survivors and their families were said to see no point in reporting such incidents.

Box 4: The coronavirus as a crisis on top of multiple crises

The COVID-19 pandemic adds an extra burden on top of the existing crises Yemenis face. The disease has spread across the country, including in Taiz, where health infrastructure was already incapable of tackling existing outbreaks of cholera, dengue fever and diphtheria.²⁷ In April 2020, only four ventilators were available for the 3.11 million people living in Taiz Governorate – all of them in just one hospital. The lack of PPE sparked fear among health personnel about contracting the disease. Social stigma, due to a lack of sensitization about COVID-19, and public mistrust of the health system, motivated civilians not to seek medical care at hospitals.²⁸ Despite under-reporting, official figures place Taiz Governorate second-highest for suspected COVID-19 cases in the country.²⁹

Prevention measures imposed by authorities between April and August 2020 included partial lockdowns, closure of entry points and some reductions in public gatherings. This was devastating for the many Yemenis who depend on daily labour to make ends meet. Meanwhile, measures in neighbouring countries affected the flow of remittances from families abroad – further worsening conditions for their dependants.

CBPN members from IDP communities in particular said they experienced social discrimination and were accused of being a source of COVID-19 infection. Many believed this stigma to be due to the poor infrastructure and lack of services at IDP locations, with a majority of respondents saying that they lack proper water and sanitation services. Facilities tend to be particularly

bad for displaced *Muhamasheen* communities. Basic facilities such as latrines are often scarce, and in some cases, *Muhamasheen* participants told us that dozens of people are forced to share one toilet. One respondent said that following heavy rains, water pools – including sewage – remain in the streets for weeks, exposing children to cholera and other infections.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For almost six years, communities across Yemen have faced unthinkable living conditions and severe threats to their safety and security. Taiz Governorate, while not unique in its dangers, continues to be a hotspot of protection threats. Increasing incidents of indiscriminate shelling, airstrikes and stray fire as clashes erupt in residential areas continue to endanger and obstruct civilians' access to basic services. This is in itself a gross violation of the rights of women, men, girls and boys. In turn, the lack of assistance is exacerbating protection threats and leading to negative coping strategies – including child marriage and child labour. Gender-based violence is a particular threat to those forced to travel long distances in search of basic necessities.

Two years on from the UN-brokered Stockholm Agreement, there is still no clear prospect of a meaningfully inclusive, peaceful resolution. Nonetheless, the warring parties and the international community must fulfil their commitments to address the situation in Taiz. It is essential that people are able to access the services they need, and that humanitarian organizations can reach affected populations. In the immediate term, the humanitarian community must continue to address current challenges – including the most extreme deprivation and violence, concentrated in Taiz city – and develop new strategies to ensure community resilience and positive coping mechanisms. In the longer term, restoring stability and services is vital for communities' resilience and to ensure that people are able to provide for themselves and their families. Above all else, there is a need for all warring parties and their backers to ensure respect for IHL, prioritize the protection of civilians and return to inclusive peace negotiations.

Parties to the conflict should:

- Respect and adhere to IHL and ensure the protection of civilian men, women and children, and civilian infrastructure, such as homes, roads, schools and hospitals.
- Ensure the functionality of judicial and legal services, and facilitate civilian access within and between governorates to obtain legal services, including civil identification.
- Ensure that local and international humanitarian NGOs are able to operate freely and implement protection services with full access to affected communities, and that staff and property are protected from harm.

- Fully commit to a nationwide ceasefire and immediately return to meaningfully inclusive peace talks.
- Support the full implementation of the Stockholm Agreement – including the Taiz Understanding, which calls for the formation of a joint committee including representatives from civil society and the UN.
- Ensure safe, adequate and dignified access to land for IDPs, with locations determined through consultations with displaced communities.

Humanitarian actors including the UN, donors and INGOs, should:

- Increase humanitarian funding to ensure that effective protection programming can be scaled up in order to reduce threats (including those coming from within communities) and risk exposure.
- Focus on economic empowerment and livelihoods programmes to ensure community resilience.
- Ensure that assistance (including, for instance, minimum food basket provisions) considers fuel sources in order to minimize protection concerns related to firewood collection. Efforts should be made to ensure that fuel sources are energy-efficient.
- Increase programmes specifically targeting marginalized and stigmatized groups, such as *Muhamasheen*, and addressing threats that originate within communities – such as early marriage.

The international community should pressure warring parties to:

- Adhere to IHL obligations and take every possible measure to protect civilian men, women and children, and protect civilian infrastructure, including by ending the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.
- Immediately halt military operations, committing to a nationwide ceasefire.
- Keep up engagement around the Stockholm Agreement as the foundation for – but not a pre-condition to – a comprehensive and inclusive peace process.
- Fulfil their commitments to a ceasefire, including by pushing for an inclusive peace process that engages Yemeni women, youth and civil society groups.

NOTES

All links last accessed 2 December 2020, except where specified.

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- 3 According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, the prisoner exchange involved the synchronized take-off and landing of 11 flights, arriving in five different cities: Sana'a, Seiyun and Aden (in Yemen), and Abha and Riyadh (in Saudi Arabia). Al-Jazeera. (2020, October 17). *Yemen's warring sides complete largest prisoner swap in 5 years*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/17/yemens-warring-sides-complete-largest-prisoner-swap>. The UN Special Envoy noted following the swap that many thousands of people detained in the conflict have still not been released. United Nations (UN). (2020, October 15). *Welcoming Mass Prisoner Swap in Yemen as 'Airlift of Hope', Speakers Urge Government, Houthi Rebels to Negotiate Durable Peace, during Security Council Briefing*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/welcoming-mass-prisoner-swap-yemen-airlift-hope-speakers-urge-government-houthi-rebels>
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- 10 Taiz has seen an increase in casualties (particularly of women and children) resulting from sniper fire, which is used as a tactic of intimidation, especially on the outskirts of Taiz city. See Civilian Impact Monitoring (CIMP). (2020). *CIMP Quarterly Report: Q3: July – September 2020*. https://civilianimpactmonitoring.org/onewebmedia/CIMP%20Quarterly%20Report_2020_Q3.pdf
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