

**Will 2022 be the year of peace in Yemen?! A forward-looking vision for the role of the UN envoy in Peacemaking.**



**Executive Summary**

Since the political instability in Yemen during the events of the Arab Spring in 2011, and the subsequent devastating war that has been raging for nearly seven years, Yemen has been experiencing one of the worst humanitarian and economic crises in the world. That war killed nearly 377,000 people directly and indirectly until the end of 2021, and exhausted its economy. Its loss amounted to \$126 billion. In addition, the war destroyed the infrastructure, tore national cohesion, deepened regionalism and class, and reinforced sectarian and separatist concepts. Despite the alternation of four international envoys, between Arabs and non-Arabs, to extricate Yemen and Yemenis from what had happened to them, those who meditates what the envoys' results led to, finds no trace in the concrete reality.

Here comes the year 2021, accompanied by pessimistic statements made by the new UN envoy, Mr. Hans Grundberg, on December 14, to the members of the Security Council, where he indicated that the situation in Yemen has become more

complex. He is sincere in his pessimism; as the tragedies of the war are still at their most intense and the series of suffering continues.

Therefore, this paper seeks to present a forward-looking vision of the Yemeni political reality during the year 2022, based on an evaluation review of the political and military events of 2021 to understand the situation in a more comprehensive manner, an assessment of the performance of the former UN envoys to understand the causes of failure and build on the successes, and in light of a survey of the opinions of a sample of Yemenis (academics, political activists), media professionals, youth, women, marginalized people) carried out by the Yemen Information Center- Ibb, in order to share as many opinions as possible about their vision of the causes of failures, their perceptions about ending the war and building sustainable peace, and their expectations for the extent of peace in 2022.

If anticipating the transformations in the Yemeni problem in 2022 indicates that we will be on a date with more intense and dynamic events and initiatives, on the surface, while in depth it is mined with the intertwined complexities of 2021, which indicates that the chances of peace will be much slower than the accelerating wheel of war, especially since there are some military escalations on most of the battle fronts.

Most of the responses of those whose opinions were surveyed believe that ending the war and peacemaking is not a local affair, but rather a regional affair par excellence, but it will only be achieved through the Yemenis themselves. Hence, the most important reasons for the international failure - from their point of view - are due to the regional interests in Yemen; Most of the opinions considered that the encouragement of the countries of the region to certain parties outside the Yemeni legitimacy has strengthened their thorn and weakened the legitimacy, which they expect is dying.

## **Introduction**

Since the outbreak of the war in Yemen between the Arab coalition led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Ansar Allah Houthi group in 2016, it was announced at that time that the goal of that war was to restore the legitimate authority represented by President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who fled Sanaa after the Ansar Allah Houthi group had placed him under house arrest.

Despite the elapse of seven years, the war did not achieve its goal that was declared when it began. How much time remains to achieve its goal? Is that still possible? The Yemenis wondered who were exhausted by the war, who witnessed killing tens of thousands of their children, left hundreds of thousands wounded, millions displaced and homeless, destroyed Yemen's infrastructure, tore its social fabric, clouded its national identity, and restored in it the sectarian and regional spirit that had begun to fade from the collective consciousness.

The year 2021 passed a few days ago, laden with great concerns and without significant achievements, despite the tireless initiatives and efforts that were made through the Omani mediation, through the American envoy, and the four UN envoys who took turns in Yemen during eleven years in order to get Yemen out of this dark tunnel to safety, but they did not achieve any achievements, neither at the political nor the military level, and this failure is attributed to many factors; the most important of which are: the complexities of the Yemeni scene and its intertwining and the multiplicity of local and regional parties with divergent visions and divergent interests.

The question that imposes itself here and that Yemenis ask bitterly as they enter the New Year: Will 2022 be the year of peace and exit from the nightmare of war and bloodshed, or will it be an extension of 2021?

This paper will attempt to answer this question based on two pillars: the first is to trace the political and military reality of 2022 by shedding light on the most

important events that occurred in 2021; It is not possible to predict what the situation will be like in 2022 without going back to what the situation was like in 2021. The second is to draw upon a set of ideas and perceptions for a sample of Yemenis from academic backgrounds and different social strata, which amounted to 34 people; They are divided into the following categories: academics (13), women (12), marginalized (1), media professionals (5), youth (2), and this sample was selected according to control criteria represented by their being the most aware and understanding of the causes and complexities of the conflict, and among the most suffering categories from its repercussions, in addition to the fact that they represent different regions of the Yemeni geography, and most importantly, it was taken into account in this sample that they are not involved in the conflict.

Their opinions were surveyed by asking them four questions; which revolves around assessing the outcomes of the Yemeni situation in the previous year and the practical solutions that should be taken to avoid that shortcoming in the current year in order to achieve the desired peace, and it was sent through social media.

This paper aims to contribute to presenting a purely Yemeni vision consisting of different points of view that may carry a useful idea, which may contribute to enlightening peacemakers on the Yemeni issue. The nature and purpose of the study necessitated that it proceed in two objects, the first relates to a review of the events of 2021, and the second relates to the opinions of those surveyed, then conclusions and recommendations.

### **The first object: a critical review of the events of the past year**

In order for peace makers to find a realistic methodology for ending the war and building a sustainable peace process, we begin this paper with a quick critical review that serves as an account of what has been done during the past year; In order to give a clear picture of the nature of the conflict during 2021 and the

factors that fueled it and could prolong its duration in the following year if the matter remains unresolved.

### **Highlights of 2021**

The year 2021 was one of the most formidable years for Yemenis on all levels, and now it goes with political, military and economic concerns that have exhausted Yemenis in an unprecedented way:

#### **Political framework:**

##### **United Nations**

On January 7, 2021, former UN envoy Martin Griffiths visited Aden; Following a horrific bombing targeting the government of Maeen Abdul Malik at Aden Airport on December 30, 2020. In June, the United Nations formally announced the resignation of Mr. Martin Griffiths and his appointment as Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. With the end of his mission, Griffiths said in his last briefing before the UN Security Council: “The political and armed parties have multiplied and fragmented and foreign interference in Yemen has increased. What was possible with regard to resolving the conflict in the past years is no longer possible today, and what is possible today may not be possible in the future”. In his last briefing, there was something like admitting the failure of his mission, but he attributed that failure to the fact that the Yemeni parties are “unable” to overcome their conflicts, as he declared that Ansar Allah is the biggest obstacle, as many observers attributed Griffith’s departure to that the Ansar Allah Houthi Group did not accept to meet him in the Omani capital, Muscat, while others said that his departure was due to his inability to achieve any significant progress to end the war in Yemen.

On July 2, it was announced that the Swedish/ Hans Grundberg had been chosen as the UN envoy to Yemen to succeed Martin Griffiths, and the Yemeni government agreed to appoint him on July 17, to become the fourth UN envoy to Yemen. Since

his appointment, he has made several regional and international visits to the Yemeni cities of Aden and Taiz, which are under the control of the legitimate government that is internationally recognized at the theoretical level, and met representatives of civil society organizations.

Grundberg's approach focuses on the policy of a comprehensive sustainable solution and comprehensive participation by all sectors of the Yemeni people in addition to avoiding partial solutions. He delivered three briefings to the Security Council on the situation in Yemen, the last of which was on December 14 of the last year, during which he expressed his deep concern about the military escalation in Marib, warning of a street war if Ansar Allah forces overran Marib, and also stressed that the military options will not lead to sustainable solutions, and in this context, Russia has warned through its envoy in the Security Council of the failure of the UN envoy, as this will have serious consequences for the Yemeni people.

### **United States of America**

Foreign policy toward the Yemeni file shifted with the arrival of US President Biden to power in January 2021, as the US administration announced three decisive decisions: ending US support for all offensive military operations and related arms deals to Saudi Arabia, and supporting United Nations efforts to resolve the conflict as well as the appointment of the American diplomat (Timothy Lenderking) as a special envoy to Yemen. At the same time, it assured the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that it will stand by it to defend its sovereignty, its territorial integrity and its people.

Although America has been the most prominent ally of Saudi Arabia since its founding, and at the beginning of the war in 2015 it announced its endorsement and support for it, the current administration decided to turn to the role of a political mediator in order to succeed in ending the war. Therefore, it canceled the classification of the Houthis from the terrorist list that his predecessor Trump had

included them in days before the end of his term in January 2021. Five months later, Lenderking announced Washington's recognition of the Houthis as a "legitimate party", justifying that the group "has made great gains, and they should be dealt with according to this reality".

The American administration wanted to play with the Houthis the carrot and stick policy, as it thought that Ansar Allah would seize the American carrot as soon as Ansar Allah group obtained guarantees that it would be able to remain as a primary partner in post-war power, but Ansar Allah did not pay attention to the American carrot - and it seems that it Indifferent to the stick - at that time, America began to wave the policy of the stick, so the US Treasury Department punished some Houthi leaders by imposing financial sanctions on them, despite realizing that most of the group's leaders may not have external bank accounts; in any case, these sanctions did not work.

In the context of talking about US policy regarding the Yemeni conflict, it should be noted here that there is a division between the two main American parties, Democrats and Republicans, on the issue of US strategy towards Yemen, as a large part of Democrats believe that what Saudi Arabia is doing in the war on Yemen deserves denounce and condemnation, at least morally, while most Republicans view the war on Yemen through the Iranian lens, as they see the use of military force as the most effective way to undermine the Iranian role.

### **Visits to Aden**

In November, the US Special Envoy for Yemen, Tim Lenderking, and the officer in charge Cathy Westley visited the interim capital, Aden, and met the Prime Minister (Maeen Abdul Malik), some members of his government, and representatives of Yemeni civil society. This was preceded by a visit by the European Union to Aden, during which it expressed its support for the completion of the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement, and the EU ambassadors

(Germany, France, the Netherlands and Sweden) met with the President of the Southern Transitional Council (Aidaros Al-Zubaidi), and with some leaders in Aden.

### **Political Initiatives**

In March 2021, Saudi Arabia proposed a UN-supervised ceasefire initiative between the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and the Ansar Allah Houthi group. The Saudi initiative seemed to offer some of the concessions that the Houthis had previously demanded, namely a comprehensive nationwide ceasefire, the reopening of vital air and sea lines, and the start of political negotiations leading to an end to the war.

### **Omani Mediation**

The United Nations and the American envoy wanted to push the Saudi peace initiative forward, as this would be a resounding success towards ending the war. Therefore, they invested in Amman- which has become a center for their diplomatic activity - to play the role of mediator between the Ansar Allah Houthi group on the one hand, and the international and regional community and the internationally recognized government on the other hand due to Oman's ideal mediation elements, it is accepted by all parties to varying degrees. After shuttle visits by the Sultanate between Sanaa, Riyadh and Muscat, it is clear that it did not achieve any significant progress, and the Saudi initiative was rejected by the Ansar Allah group.

### **Political moves of the Southern Transitional Council**

After the internationally recognized government agreed with the Transitional Council to form an equal/partnership government, under the auspices of Saudi Arabia, as one of the outcomes of the Riyadh Agreement, the head of the Transitional Council left for Moscow and met officials in the Russian Foreign Ministry, which was interpreted as a Russian rapprochement with the Council, but



no agreement results from that visit, and no different orientation was observed for the Russian policy, which has always adhered to a neutral position, stressing the futility of a military solution in the Yemeni conflict. The head of the council (Al-Zubaidi) then headed to Abu Dhabi, where he continued until May, to return to Aden against the background of media wrangling and exchanges about the non-implementation of the Riyadh Agreement. During his speech on May 21 to recall the council's demand for the so-called "disengagement" which had been announced by former Yemeni Vice President Ali Salem Al-Beidh on May 21, 1994, He stressed that the government's failure to return to Aden is nothing but a disruption of the Riyadh Agreement, and threatened that "all options are open to the Council and the people of the south". At the end of July, the presidency of the council directed its negotiators in Riyadh to withdraw from the negotiations against the background of what they called the hijacking of the local authority's decision in Shabwa governorate by the Islah party and the practice of terrorism and abuse against the people of the governorate, but Saudi Arabia took the initiative and contained the matter as it invited the two parties to the agreement to implement the terms of the agreement, and made it clear that political and military decisions taken by the Transitional Council and the accompanying media escalation are not in line with what was signed in the Riyadh Agreement.

In September, the President of the Transitional Council (Al-Zubaidi) announced the imposition of a state of emergency and general mobilization in the governorates under his control. This announcement came during popular protests in some southern cities and the city of Taiz as a result of the deterioration of services. In November, the economic situation worsened and the Yemeni riyal collapsed to its lowest level, and here the Transitional Council came out again, waving to withdraw from the government of which it is part, and blaming it "the responsibility for the accelerated deterioration in the economic and service

conditions”, which prompted Saudi Arabia once again to call on the President of the Council to Riyadh, so he left Aden in mid-November and is still there until now, taking advantage of his stay there by conducting diplomatic meetings with some ambassadors, especially the ambassadors of the Quartet countries (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States) to Yemen, and their discussions focused on the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement, which more than two years has elapsed since its signature.

### **Protests and Demonstrations**

As a result of the deteriorating living conditions and the rise in the prices of oil derivatives, and the accompanying obstruction of the political horizon between the two signatories of the Riyadh Agreement, popular protests began in March in some cities of the south, which vanished after the departure of the government of Maeen Abdul-Malik from Aden to Riyadh, to return again in September against the reality of the economic collapse, the deterioration of the national currency and the rise in prices, as most cities in the south and the city of Taiz witnessed angry demonstrations denouncing the deteriorating living conditions, and demanding the departure of the government of Maeen Abdul Malik.

### **Departure and return of the government**

On March 16, 2021, the government headquarters of Maeen Abdul-Malik was broken into by angry demonstrators, demanding improvement in the economic situation and public services reportedly to be supported by the transitional council which led Abdul Malik Government to leave Aden and to Riyadh to stay there up till its return on September 28, 2021 after absence for six month.

### **Establishment of the Political Bureau of the National Resistance**

In March 2021, Brigadier-General Tariq Saleh, nephew of former President Ali Saleh, announced the establishment of the "Political Bureau of the National Resistance" in the city of Mochaa, west of the city of Taiz, and stated that the

establishment of that entity did not aim to transcend legitimacy; rather, it seeks to be a part of it. In October, Tariq Saleh, "the leader of the national resistance in the West Coast", called for real partnerships with the active political forces - led by the internationally recognized government and the Southern Transitional Council - to resist the Houthis, and the transitional welcomed that step that aimed - according to his official spokesman, "Al-Kathiri"- to unite the ranks to confront Al-Houthi along the lines of contact in the south and Yemen."

### **Changing the local council in Shabwa**

In November 2021, signs of opposition to the influence of the former governor of Shabwa governorate, Muhammad bin Saleh bin Adio, who is said to be tempted to the ideology of the Yemeni Islah party, began. After regional and local pressures, President Hadi issued a decision appointing Awad Muhammad al-Awlaki as his successor on December 25, and the transitional council welcomed the decision. This indicates that the change came in accordance with understandings related to the Riyadh Agreement and with the United Arab Emirates.

### **Breaking into the US Embassy**

On November 19, individuals affiliated with Ansar Allah group broke into the US embassy in Sana'a, which led to widespread international condemnation and American indignation.

### **American and British soldiers in Yemen**

On August 7, 2021, 40 British Special Forces soldiers arrived at Al-Ghaydah Airport in Al-Mahra Governorate, southern Yemen, with a unit specialized in electronic warfare in the field of communications, on the mission of "tracking down terrorists affiliated to Iran" (in reference to the Houthis) who were said to have attacked the oil tanker "Mercer Street" in the Gulf of Oman, and on December 8, 2021, US President Joe Biden revealed the deployment of a limited

number of US forces in Yemen, to carry out operations against Al-Qaeda and ISIS, and this came during his review of the map of US forces in the Middle East during a message sent to Congress.

### **Division within the legitimate institution**

With the length of the war period, and after the waning of hope for any military resolution, and with the absence of real indications of a political solution and the worsening of the Yemeni crisis day after day, voices of great political weight have emerged from within the official Yemeni legitimacy camp saying that the war has reached a dead end, and it is time for the Yemenis With all their political and ideological inclinations to take the initiative themselves, seek peace, and end the war in isolation from the Arab coalition led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which- as those voices describe- deviated from its goals announced at the beginning of its military operations in 2015, and proved during seven years of The conflict has its own political agendas that it seeks to achieve through the Yemeni legitimate institution, whose political and military decision has become dependent on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This dependence has paralyzed its movement and it has become unable to resist the Houthis, which - as stated in their statement - is the first cause behind the destruction of Yemen.

In the context of that discontent with the coalition and the government alike, the spokesman of the Yemeni Shura Council, the First Vice President of the General People's Congress, the former Prime Minister (Ahmed Obaid bin Daghr), the Deputy Speaker of Parliament (supporting the legitimate government) and the former Deputy Prime Minister (Abdulaziz Jabari) came out inviting Yemenis to rally around a national political initiative aimed at forming a national coalition of all Yemenis that saves Yemen from further fragmentation and destruction, preserves the republic and unity, and contributes to ending the bloody war under international sponsorship and Egyptian support, and for that alliance to derive its

goals from the principles and values of the September 26 revolution 1962, and rejects the return of the imamate, and puts the supreme interest of the nation above all considerations (initiative of Ben Daghr and Jabbari).

### **The Military Framework:**

Since the beginning of the year, the Ansar Allah group has intensified its attacks on the governorate of Marib, and on February 10, 2021 they were able to control the Kovel camp in the Serwah district. In July, the Yemeni army announced the start of a military operation called “Al-Najm Al-Thaqib” aimed at liberating Al-Bayda Governorate. After achieving some victories, those government forces suffered a setback and retreated, so that Ansar Allah group controlled the entire Al-Bayda Governorate through a military operation they called "The Clear Victory" Operation.

Battles continued to rage on the outskirts of Marib, especially in the areas of Al-Mashjah and Al-Kasara. In September 2021, the Houthis deepened in Shabwa governorate and took control of the entire Bihan, Ain and Harib districts, and then headed towards the center of Marib governorate through those gaps. In October, the Houthis announced that they had completed their control over three districts. In Shabwa Governorate: Usailan, Bayhan, and Ain. They also took control of the districts of Harib, Al-Abdiyyah and Al-Juba of the Marib Governorate. Finally, Ansar Allah group announced at the end of 2021 that it had completed its control over Al-Jawf Governorate.

### **The withdrawal of the joint forces from the West Coast**

In November 2021, the Yemeni government, many Yemeni political and military circles, and the United Nations were also surprised by the sudden withdrawal of the joint forces that were stationed on the western coast led by Brigadier General Tariq Saleh, to redeploy them in a way that is incomprehensible to many, to announce that they liberated several of the entire Hays area and parts of the Al-

Jarrahi district, then they headed towards the Moqbnna mountains near the Tohami coast and announced the liberation of several villages. At the end of 2021, the Giants Brigades of the Joint Forces announced their movement towards Shabwa Governorate to contribute to the liberation of the districts of Shabwa Governorate, which fell to the Houthis last September. It is not known whether it will continue its advance towards Marib and Al-Bayda, or will it stop at the 1990 borders.

### **Targeting Saudi Arabia**

Several regions in Saudi Arabia are constantly under attack by ballistic missiles and booby-trapped drones launched by the Ansar Allah group from inside Yemen towards Saudi airports and oil installations inside the Saudi depth.

### **Intensification of air raids on Sanaa**

The Saudi-led Arab coalition recently escalated its air raids on the capital, Sanaa, and the various battlefronts, after those sorties had been greatly reduced during the first half of 2021.

### **Economic Framework:**

The year 2021 began with a noticeable deterioration in the price of the Yemeni riyal, as the value of the dollar against the riyal reached 730, to reach at the end of the year 1,700 riyals, and this is the lowest deterioration of the riyal throughout its history.

### **Humanitarian framework:**

The humanitarian situation worsened in 2021, and the number of displaced people doubled to reach an unprecedented number of displaced people, exceeding 4 million displaced people, according to statistics from government reports. The number of civilian casualties is constantly increasing, and nearly 16 million people suffer from food insecurity, while five million are still one step away from famine, and nearly 400,000 children are facing imminent death due to malnutrition. The United Nations Resident Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs in Yemen, David

Gresley, described the situation last October, as grave and warning of its repercussions.

If we want to summarize the Yemeni reality during the year 2021, we can say that the political initiatives to end the conflict have diminished and the probability of their success has diminished, and the regional mediations to move the peace process have gradually faded and fallen into oblivion. He did not announce his failure and no indications of his success. The internationally recognized government is experiencing an internal crisis and divisions within its ranks that threaten its existence and legitimacy.

The conviction of the international community and the US administration - which considered that the Ansar Allah Houthi group is an essential part of the peace-building process if it obtained sufficient guarantees that would make it a partner in post-war Yemen - has begun to diminish. It seems that the resumption of air strikes on Sanaa and other cities is only a translation of these changes in attitudes, as Saudi Arabia has been liberated from international pressure, especially since the Ansar Allah group has escalated its attacks on Marib Governorate, and its missile attacks on Saudi Arabia, in addition to its detention of American embassy employees in Sanaa, which made it easier for Saudi Arabia to re-intensify air strikes on vital places, with tacit international support.

Marib Governorate has many incentives, and if it falls into the hands of Ansar Allah, this will constitute a huge financial resource that will enable them to prolong the war. The US administration, the United Nations and the internationally recognized Yemeni government have all begun to warn against the Houthis' continuation of their advance towards the city of Marib, warning that its fall - if it happens - would be a humanitarian catastrophe and blow up any future peace process.

Field developments on the West Coast and the withdrawal of the joint forces led by Tariq Saleh on November 12, 2021 without the knowledge of the legitimate government gives us an indication that major military operations and decisions are not being carried out by orders through the internationally recognized government. The military developments that are taking place in Shabwa governorate have many indications, the most important of which is that the military achievements are linked to the internationally recognized government's abandonment of some of its "hard line" positions on some issues, which do not appeal to regional or international bodies.

The accelerated and dramatic currency collapse and the protests that accompanied it were able to be overcome in a relatively short period, and the direct reason was attributed to the change in the management of the Central Bank, but this was not convincing for many people who see that the currency collapse is linked to administrative and political decisions that the government must take to satisfy regional parties.

Here is the year 2021 leaving unrepentant, but the question remains: what will 2022 be? Does it carry signs and indicators that it will be a year of peace and consensus, or is the political horizon still blocked and difficult to penetrate? Based on these facts that we discussed earlier, the UN envoy will face a number of challenges, especially as he remains for many Yemenis and the international community as a savior and hope for them to decipher this complex situation and make a breakthrough in the solid crisis wall, leading to ending the war and building sustainable peace. How will he break those talismans? This is what the second object of this paper (the survey) will mean.

### **The Second Object: The Survey**

A contribution from the Yemen Information Center for Studies, Research and Media Production to provide an objective vision for peacemakers and those



interested in Yemeni affairs about Yemenis' impressions of the role of the United Nations and their evaluation of the performance of the UN envoys and their suggestions for practical solutions to end the war and build a sustainable peace process, the administration of Ibb branch made opinion survey for opinions of a sample consisting of academics, scholars, politicians, media personnel, women and youth from some Yemeni governorates focused on the following four questions:

1. How do you evaluate or read the approach of the former UN envoys in ending the conflict and making peace?
2. What, in your opinion, are the appropriate approaches and practical mechanisms that the United Nations and its new envoy can follow in order to achieve the goal of ending the war and creating a sustainable peace process?
3. Since all the previous and new envoys affirmed that ending the war in Yemen is in the hands of the Yemenis themselves, and that the success of the peace process or a comprehensive political settlement requires comprehensive participation (civil society organizations, political parties, women, youth, tribes): what is the practical or realistic mechanism to achieve effective and achievable participation in negotiations to end the war and build the peace process?
4. Do you expect 2022 to be the year of peace? Why?

Regarding the answer to the first question centered on evaluating the approach of the former UN envoys to ending the conflict and making peace, four UN envoys took turns managing the Yemeni file with the aim of bringing Yemen to safety. Despite this intense international presence, the humanitarian, political, military and economic situation has become increasingly complex with the appointment of each new envoy to Yemen, the humanitarian situation in Yemen has become the worst in the world. As the living and economic deterioration has reached the stage of

complete collapse, the military situation has become more fierce than ever, and the political reality is becoming more blurry and complex day by day. In general, we can say: The UN envoys - as Dr. Najib Abdo Mohsen from Dhamar University said - have achieved little of what was hoped for from them in terms of political achievements and an end to the Yemeni conflict. This is confirmed by the opinions of all those who were interviewed without exception; they argue that the UN envoys did not achieve anything, but some of them attributed part of those failures to the nature of the Yemeni conflict, as we will notice in the following lines:

### **Envoys are just mediators**

UN envoys routinely describe themselves as mere mediators, whose job is to urge the conflicting parties to reach a peaceful settlement. Some believe that the convictions of the UN envoys that they are merely coordinators and mediators, and that they have limited tasks represented in converging the views of the parties to the conflict, is the reason behind their failure. In other words, if the UN envoy was successful, within the limits of his convictions, it will be ok; Otherwise, the Secretary-General must replace him with others to delve into the same points, and thus the appointment of UN envoys becomes a routine task and nothing more. Dr. Abdul Rahman Bishr - Professor of Economics at Ibb University - says, "The role of the UN envoy depends on the role entrusted to the United Nations itself in resolving armed conflicts by sending envoys to investigate facts and facilitate negotiations, with opinions and proposals, or by submitting non-binding initiatives, and submitting a report on this to the Security Council which is empowered to issue binding decisions, and the implementation of decisions depends on the extent of the international supportive position for the UN envoy...so changing the UN envoys is a functional procedure". In this context, the former head of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (Abdul Bari Taher) believes that the UN envoy receives instructions from the Secretary-General, and his recurring task is to seek opinions,

and raise it to the concerned authorities. Similarly, the journalist in Aden Al-Ghad newspaper (Adnan Hajar) believes that "the United Nations deals with the Yemeni file as a mere projection of duty". In this context, the Director of Information at the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Aden (Shukri Hassan) says that the roles of the UN envoys are similar; They work under the umbrella of the United Nations and are subject to its directions... What makes the difference between them is the charisma of the UN envoy and his familiarity with the complexities of the conflict, and he believes that the new envoy (Hans Grundberg) enjoys these two qualities due to his long experience as an ambassador of the European Union to Yemen. This view is shared by the Director of Youth Activities in the Youth and Sports Office in Ibb Governorate (Shura Al-Baadani), who said: What has been observed about the role of the United Nations in the Yemeni file until this moment appears to be unable to make any breakthrough for peacemaking in Yemen so far, and this matter is due to several reasons attributed to the fact that the United Nations is a global organization that presents itself as a neutral mediator, and does not have a large and strong influence to interfere in such conflicts... Its goal is to establish peace in the world and to intervene in conflict areas as a mediator to bring views closer. In this regard, Dr. Ali Al-Asali, the academic official of the Syndicate of Faculty Members at Sana'a University and a political analyst based in the Jordanian capital, Amman, says, "The envoys are facilitators and reflect the interests and contradictions of the major countries and their consensus, and they have nothing new to offer". Noman Al-Hudhaifi, head of the National Union for the Marginalized and Head of the National Council for Minorities in Yemen (under establishment) believes that the approach of the United Nations envoys did not differ from one another, as all their work focused on trying to bring the viewpoints of the warring parties closer, and they did not have international solutions that lead

all parties towards achieving peace in Yemen; Therefore, their efforts remained far from achieving the aspirations of the Yemeni people for security and stability.

The logical and common question for many - whether in the Yemeni street or in the political, media and academic circles - remains: What is the point of changing the UN envoys while the United Nations is watching what is happening in Yemen as if it were a football match that had no end, only changing the coaches - that is, the envoys - and turn a blind eye to the performance of the players?!

Which means that this internationalist discourse centered around the principle of mediation confused the scene, shuffled the cards and floated concepts. Here, others ask: If the UN envoys - as they describe themselves - are tigers without fangs, lions drawn on paper, or cartoon ghosts, what is the point of them?! What is the point of the Security Council and its resolutions if it is not implemented on the ground? In this context, I read an article in a newspaper a while ago on this subject; Where the writer wondered: If the role of the UN envoy is merely a mediator; Is it not possible to perform this role successfully - and perhaps better - through "a tribal sheikh from the Arhab region"?!

In order to be objective, we must admit that the international envoys do not have a magic wand to impose solutions and decisions. Dr. Abdul Rahman Bishr says: "They were not and will not be able to change the political and military reality in Yemen unless they are backed by strict and decisive measures from the Security Council". The interests of these countries are intertwined and conflicted; this made the Yemeni conflict subject to the evaluation of these countries individually based on their political agenda, ideological outlook, economic and security interests, and then the Security Council became deeply divided on many issues related to the Yemeni issue.

## **Failure to evaluate performance**

Journalist Adnan Hajar says “One of the reasons for the failures of UN envoys is the failure to evaluate their work during their tenure as envoys or after their departure from work, so they do not talk about their failures until after they leave their positions”.

## **Impartiality**

Dr. Tariq Al-Mansoub, President of Ibb University, believes that the UN envoys lack impartiality regarding the Yemeni issue. They often take one side against the other, and lose professionalism and impartiality in managing the conflict, perhaps due to many factors; The most prominent of them is the well-established and prior idea of all envoys that there is a (legal) party and a coup (illegitimate) party, and this is the idea from which all international mediators started, although their role is supposed to be based on a simple legal basis based on non-representation of the Yemeni people, and respect for their will in Choosing a representative, and the necessity of dealing with all parties as parties to an internal conflict, and distinguishing them from the external party, i.e. representatives of the “aggression” countries in all rounds of negotiations, meaning setting two tracks for negotiations: A Yemeni-Yemeni track, and a Yemeni-non-Yemeni track, and identifying different points for negotiation in each track, in order to facilitate the negotiation process. In this context, Dr. Sadiq Al-Shamiri, Vice President of Taiz University, said: "In my point of view, the approach of the previous UN envoys was not based on ending the conflict and making peace in Yemen as much as it was about slowing down the peace process, by clearly siding with a party against another party to the conflict at all stages of negotiation with the parties, and this is evidenced by the reports they submitted to each of the Security Council sessions held on Yemen, which result in criticisms directed by the other party to the UN

envoy with bias, while the permissive party persists with him prolonging conflict and war.

Some of those surveyed believe that the UN envoys do not enjoy complete independence; As a result of the pressures of the countries of the region, says Dr. Tariq Al-Mansoub: "The UN envoy received Gulf dictates that hindered him from managing the conflict, and his lack of independence and the will to take the appropriate decision at the right time. Dr. Ahmed Al-Mikhlafi, an academic at Sana'a University, says that the UN envoys did not have clear plans for a solution in Yemen, but rather each of them sought to satisfy specific parties, and in particular what meets the desires of the coalition countries.

### **Lack of international influence and pressure on one party but not the other**

Some of those whose opinions were surveyed believe that the lack of a strong international influence on the Ansar Allah Houthi group is one of the most important factors in the failure of the UN envoys in Yemen. The United Nations and the international community in general can put pressure on the internationally recognized Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia, but they have no real leverage over the Houthis. Kristen Diwan, a resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, says that she believes Saudi Arabia is willing to make a deal to find a way out of the Yemen war. "The problem is exactly how you can push the Houthis to the negotiating table, especially when they think they are on a winning path", she adds: "The indifference of the Ansar Allah group to the United Nations and its envoys is evident in the refusal of the Houthi delegation currently in Amman to meet with the UN envoy- Martin Griffiths, arguing that "it does not carry anything new". Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Wahsh, professor of psychology at Ibb University, says, "The practice Pressure on one party and the failure to apply the same pressure on the other party produces an equation of mixed results, and thus begins complain about the other party. He adds "even if the unilateral pressure

policy succeeded this success shall be illusory peace”. In the same context, Dr. Jalal Al-Madhaji believes that “if the UN envoys continue to pursue a policy of acquiescence to the parties to the war, without limitations and legal and moral bases, they will not succeed and the suffering of Yemenis will continue for a long time.”

### **Negative flexibility**

Some believe that the UN envoys practiced a policy of appeasement to the extent that they lost acceptance with the parties to the conflict, and thus the three former UN envoys became unwelcome guests, neither from the internationally recognized government nor from the Ansar Allah Houthi group, which prompted the Secretary-General of the United Nations to change them from time to time, this leads to prolonging the war and exacerbating more complex problems and challenges. Dr. Marwan Al-Tayyar, a professor of teaching methods at Ibb University, believes that the way in which the previous UN envoys dealt with ending the conflict and making peace in Yemen was characterized by leniency and nonsense, which made the conflicting parties persist in continuing the conflict and not taking into account the humanitarian aspects. In this context, the announcer, Rehab Al-Abyad, from Taiz, believes that the previous envoys did not make enough effort to pressure the parties to the conflict, but rather their attempts were mere maneuvers according to what is required for the interests of Washington, London, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. Engineer Alia Abdel Hamid, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at Bena Charity for Human Development in Taiz Governorate, believes that all the discussions that took place with all parties in the presence of the previous envoys indicate that there is no real direction and an actual will to start making peace. Similarly, Afaf Atran, a mentor from the Department of School Activities in the Education Office in Ibb Governorate, believes that the envoys are trying to satisfy all parties, but in the end they lose everyone.

## **Personal Interests**

Due to the number of envoys to Yemen- whose number reached 4 envoys in 10 years- without achieving any significant achievements, Yemeni society and the local parties to the conflict have lost confidence in the UN organization. They are seen, as Shura al-Badani says, as employees in the end, but they receive huge financial and moral benefits and privileges that make the continuation of the conflict in their interest. This view is shared by Professor Khalil Hamed, an educational mentor and educator, who says: Almost all UN envoys do not proceed except by taking into account their personal and material interests and leaving every international mission with the greatest amount of special benefits or the interests of the superpowers that control the Security Council, which are the exclusive control of United Nations decisions. . Similarly, Afaf Atran believes that when the envoys wished to continue their high-ranking jobs, there is no doubt that their concern was to prolong the war.

## **Monopoly of Negotiations**

Griffiths and Ould Cheikh reduced participation in peace negotiations to a multifaceted conflict of only two parties: the internationally recognized government and Ansar Allah al-Houthi, ignoring other key local actors with influence such as wisdom, and know-how such as university academics and civil society organizations. Dr. Al-Mathhaji says: "Failure to follow the participatory approach by expanding the participation of all groups and forces with interests in the process of ending the war and building the peace process and limiting participation to the internally conflicting parties is one of the greatest weaknesses of the former UN envoys". In this context, the director of Tamdeen Organization concerned with youth affairs (Hussein Al-Suhaili): Jamal Ben Omar, Ismail Ould Cheikh and his successor Martin Griffiths adhered to the rigid framework adopted by the United Nations, which is centered on power-sharing and monopolizing



negotiations between the two parties to the conflict as a solution to end the conflict in Yemen, as they ignored the other main local area actors that enjoy influence and legitimacy”. The community activist, Madinat Adlan, from Hadhramaut Governorate, shares the same opinion.

### **The nature and complexities of the Yemeni conflict**

Dr. Nabil Al-Sharjabi - Professor of Crisis Management at the University of Hodeidah and a political analyst - believes that the failure has accompanied the way the UN envoys to Yemen work during their period of work, but he attributed this to the nature of the Yemeni conflict, which is described as a protracted conflict that requires mechanisms and methods that differ from the used ones, which led to the absence of attractive initiatives dealing with the nature of the conflict, and here Al-Sharjabi points out that the UN envoys did not have the full vision to deal with all the dimensions of that conflict. In this context, Dr. Tariq Al-Mansoub said that the reason for the failure of the UN envoys is due to “their modesty of their experiences related to the history of the region, the causes of the ongoing conflict in Yemen and its interactions - I mean the interaction of geopolitical, economic, historical, religious and other factors behind the conflict in the region and Yemen in particular- and the background of Gulf interventions (particularly interference of “Saudi Arabia”) which is continuing there, and whoever does not have the ability to diagnose the causes of the conflict and its historical background cannot manage a file of this seriousness and sensitivity. This view is shared by the presenter of the Yemen satellite channel (Mohammed Mansour), who believes that some of the international failure in Yemen is related to the nature of the Yemeni problem, its complexities, and its internal and external dimensions that sometimes extend to the region. In this context, Hussein Al-Suhaili believes that all the envoys were focused on achieving quick successes ignoring complex nature of the conflict in Yemen. Dr. Ali Al-Asali believes that the UN envoys "relied on transferring other

experiences that may not benefit the nature of Yemeni problems and the behavior of individuals in it".

Some do not blame the UN envoys themselves, as they are, of course, not fully aware of the complexities of the Yemeni scene, but rather their advisors who - as Dr. Abdul-Malik Mansour, professor of linguistics at Ibb University says - are not closely related to the reality of the Yemeni conflict, or they belong intellectually to main parties of the conflict. Dr. Abdul-Malik Mansour continues, "The UN envoys have resorted to choosing advisers with great political credentials, but they are not attached to the reality on the ground... Let's say they have a theoretical aspect more than their understanding of the political, military and tribal interactions of the Yemeni reality", and he adds that "many of those advisors live abroad and follow the news of Yemen through television channels, and so they are now like the TV channel announcers, they don't know more about Yemen than those broadcasters know".

### **Lack of correct information**

The educator, Amira Al-Hussam from Ibb Governorate, says: The UN envoys lack mechanisms that enable them to obtain correct and accurate information from different parties, verify it and check its authenticity... What is currently being done is their reliance on reports submitted through the parties to the conflict or through other media means.

### **Lack of transparency**

Dr. Nabil Al-Sharjabi attributes part of the reasons for the failure to the mechanism followed by the United Nations in managing conflicts and wars, which is a conservative mechanism and is subject to alignment processes between the parties to the conflict and third parties that feed the parties to the conflict. Journalist Adnan Hajar believes that UN envoys have a tendency to be ambiguous, secretive and not to disclose the facts they have reached... The envoys' briefings to the

Security Council include images of ambiguity, which hinders the delegates from knowing the whole truth, as the envoys are keen to appear neutral between the parties, making the mistake shared, trying to obfuscate by shuffling.

### **Regional Interventions**

The outbreak of the conflict in Yemen has opened the door wide for regional states to directly interfere in Yemeni affairs and for several goals that serve their security, political and economic interests. Dr. Jalal Al-Mathhaji, Professor of Sociology at Ibb University, says, "The countries of the region have apparently entered the war as a supporter and have desires and interests in Yemen that they were unable to achieve previously. They saw the situation and the continuation of the war between Yemenis as an opportunity to achieve those goals". The spirit of division among members of Yemeni society, which fueled sectarian and regional conflict, and supported entities outside the authority of legitimacy for which the Decisive Storm came to return it to the capital from which it was expelled, and entities affiliated with this state or that appeared in several Yemeni regions, and created rival cantons (provinces) within the body of legitimacy .

This international encouragement led to widening the gap between the Yemenis, and gathering them around one table became very complicated, and if they met, trust would be lost between them. About that point, Professor sofian Elmakaramy-professor of history at Ibb University says ‘the mission of the first UN Envoy-Jamal Bin Omar was closer to success because the war was still in the local domain and the decision was in the hands of the Yemenis and did not move to the regional level’. In other words, when the conflict took on a regional dimension in Yemen, the local parties to the conflict became rebellious against UN decisions, and thus it became difficult for these modern and of external origin and finance entities to acquiesce to any peaceful dialogue unless it is compatible with the interests of the regional states sponsoring it. In this context, Dr. Bishr says: "The previous UN

envoys did not address the negative regional role in the conflict, and therefore those countries became shovels for the demolition of international political initiatives".

### **International interests and the absence of international support**

One of the priorities of the United States of America, and the West in general, is to eliminate Al-Qaeda around the world, including Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. The United States provided material and military aid to former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh for this purpose, but that support did not achieve the desired goal. When the Houthis came to power, they declared that one of their priorities was to eliminate terrorism represented by Al-Qaeda in Yemen, and thus the interests were matched between the Ansar Allah Houthi Group, America and the international community, and eliminating terrorism became a common goal between them, and this does not mean that it should be a systematic goal in any way. However, we can say here: The interest of the United States and the West has become more focused on combating terrorism against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula than on implementing Security Council resolutions calling for restoring the legitimate authority to Yemen and disarming Ansar Allah, in accordance with the UN resolution 2216.

The United Kingdom and France, and of course America, also have economic interests with the countries of the region, represented in the import of oil and arms sales, as these Arab countries are among the largest exporters of Arab oil to Europe and America, and are also among the largest consumers of Western and American weapons. Russia and China also have their own relations, whether with the Gulf states or with Iran, and their economic interests, and their political view of the Yemeni situation may differ and may be compatible with the rest of the council members.

In short, the interests of the permanent members of the Security Council may intersect with the resolutions and vision of the United Nations for a solution in Yemen for political, economic or strategic reasons.

In fact, some believe that the issuance of Security Council resolutions - including UN Resolution 2216 - takes place through the lens of the political and economic interests of the five permanent members. Dr. Abdul-Malik Mansour, professor of linguistics at Ibb University, says: "If these countries were keen to implement the provisions of the decision, they would have done it, but they let it erode little by little until the demand to bypass it and issue an alternative decision became a goal for those countries."

In this context, Dr. Jamil Obaid - Professor of Medical Sciences at Ibb University - says, "It is not right to be an arms dealer and a peace maker at the same time, and this is the case in the ongoing conflict in Yemen. The UAE will not have an interest in stopping war and making peace".

Dr. Mansour Al-Haidari, Professor of Public Administration at Ibb University, believes that "the ongoing war in Yemen is subject to the view of powerful regional and international players, and its continuation may be in their interest or in the interest of some of them". Hence, the role of the United Nations seems weak. Indeed, it seems that its envoys are flying without wings, falling one after the other; accordingly, if the UN envoy is not entrusted with an international will and the implementation of UN resolutions issued by the Security Council, he will remain as one who is chasing a mirage.

Accordingly, the war in Yemen and the resulting catastrophic humanitarian situation seem to be a marginal issue for the countries of the region and the international community, and its solution depends on their interests, which absolves the UN envoys a bit of responsibility. In this context, Dr. Jamil Obeid says, "The success and failure of the UN envoy to conflict areas is mainly related

to the interests of the great powers... Accordingly, the margin of maneuvering for the UN envoy remains simple, outside the goal of stopping the war and achieving a settlement, and it remains for any UN envoy to work on local files related to alleviating people's suffering and improving their living conditions, even at a minimum level, to achieve an achievement outside the interests of these countries, and relying on local advisors to understand local problems and ways to dismantle and solve them”.

### **Focus on the Human Aspect**

The humanitarian situation has reached an unimaginable stage, and Yemen is on the verge of mass famine, and the United Nations cannot overlook this coming danger, so it focused most of its efforts on this goal, and although this is to its credit and receives thanks for, the humanitarian aid will be useless if the war continues. In this context, Dr. Abdel-Rahman Bishr says: “The priority must be to achieve a comprehensive ceasefire to enable both the delivery of vital humanitarian assistance and advance peace talks in a more favorable environment...For as long as the war continues, foreign aid will not reach civilians in Yemen.

After we discussed the responses of those whose opinions were surveyed about the reasons for the failure of the UN envoys, we turn to the question about the appropriate practical mechanisms that the United Nations and its new envoy can follow to achieve the goal of ending the war and building a sustainable peace process? The opinions of the respondents were as follows:

### **Gradation of Solutions**

Dr. Nabil Al-Sharjabi believes that it is necessary first to understand the nature of the conflict in Yemen, which means first that the solution in Yemen is not legal in the sense of changing a decision or adding a new decision, but rather the new mechanisms that should be finding initiatives to discourage the conflict between the parties, and here a lot of Initiatives can be done for what we can call the third

way, which are official popular initiatives, or whatever they are, and then respond to some of the demands and conditions of the third parties that support the parties to the conflict. Then study the behaviors and attitudes of those supporting parties and work through them to achieve some breakthroughs. The important question is: "Will the United Nations be able to carry out similar actions and initiatives or simulate the victories of the junior football team between the two sides of the conflict to be the beginning of a nucleus to discourage conflict and then move to the second phase to alleviate the conflict in certain areas and after that move to the stage of submitting proposals and making concessions between the parties as such A goodwill gesture, and then building on all of that to put forward an initiative agreed upon by the parties". Ishraq Yahya Ibrahim touched on the same point, considering that the solution can only be gradual, the UN envoy begins to work on implementing the provisions of civil society, the most important of which are: preventing the bombing and targeting of civilians, public facilities and gathering centers, lifting the siege, allowing entry of oil derivatives, foodstuffs, medicine, etc., opening the airport, and following up on the issue of returning the bank and disbursing salaries Employees and promoting all that raises the economic and living standard of Yemenis.

### **Stopping the region from supporting the parties to the conflict**

Dr. Marwan Al-Tayyar believes that the United Nations should pressure to stop the regional support that fuels the conflict in Yemen and work to activate the region's role by being part of peace in Yemen and not being a party to it. Here, Ishraq Yahya Ibrahim, who is the deputy head of the Education Division in the Education Office in Sana'a Governorate, believes that "the UN envoy must lift the external guardianship and the veiled colonialism that Saudi Arabia and the UAE seek". Eman Al-Shuja'a - who is responsible for training and empowering women in Ibb

governorate - believes that the UN envoy should take into account the non-interference of external forces in fueling the conflict.

Thus, most of the responses centered around this framework, as most of them agree that regional interventions are the primary cause of prolonging the war, and that the United Nations and the international community - if they want peace - must stop those countries from tampering with Yemen's geography, sovereignty and unity.

### **Inclusiveness of participation**

Involvement of other Yemeni actors in the negotiations of the first track (the track to end the war), such as civil society organizations, youth and women, the Transitional Council, the forces led by Tariq Saleh, and the Tihama National Council. A community activist (Madina) from Hadhramaut governorate says, the UN envoy must sit repeatedly with all parties; The conflict will not be limited to the two sides of Ansar Allah and legitimate authority; However, there are other parties to the conflict, most notably the southern issue, as well as the involvement of all segments of society in developing solutions and participating in their implementation, especially women and youth; as these two groups are more affected by the war, the youth are its fuel, and the political parties that do not have a hand in the conflict are intensively involved; Because they are the only political parties that have no interest in prolonging the war. As for Dr. Najeeb Mohsen, he sees the expansion of the political movement to include Yemenis residing abroad; where they will have contributions in moving stagnant water globally and conveying the demands of the interior to global decision-making institutions.

### **Improving Economy**

Hussein Al-Suhaili believes that the economic file must be placed on top of the priorities of the work of the UN envoy to Yemen, including restoring the value of



the Yemeni riyal, ending the division of the Central Bank, unifying revenue streams, and re-exporting Yemeni oil and gas.

### **Implementation of international resolutions**

Dr. Sadiq Al-Shamiri says: “Unfortunately, the United Nations and the envoy who represents it are just mechanisms that work for the benefit of the great powers, and if those countries wanted to end the conflict and war in Yemen, they would have done so years ago, as we know that Yemen was placed under Chapter VII through Resolution (2216); therefore, All the five countries in the Security Council have to implement that resolution, as it includes mechanisms to end the war in Yemen, and then the Yemenis can make sustainable peace through dialogue between all parties away from the parties that fuel the conflict factors.

### **Putting pressure and penalties on the obstructing parties**

TV presenter (Mohamed Mansour) supports taking sanctions against parties and personalities that violate human rights, commit crimes against civilians and obstruct peace negotiations, and announce this in the UN envoy's regular briefing. Zikra Abdullah Muhammad Al-Yafei, an educator in the field of literacy in the Ibb governorate, agrees with this view, as she says: It is necessary to impose strict and harsh penalties against those who obstruct peacebuilding. Similarly, Shukri Hassan says: "Perhaps the most important mechanism that can be implemented is to put more pressure on the two sides of the conflict by the international community, especially the five full members of the Security Council and the International Quartet, to stop the bloodshed and put an end to the human tragedy, which is considered the worst in Yemeni history". Numan Al-Hudhaifi believes that the most prominent mechanisms are: "The use of international force against the party obstructing the peace process in accordance with a consensual approach that meets the aspirations and interests of all parties and in accordance with the spirit of the three references that represent the basis for solving the problem of ending the war".

### **Yemeni-Yemeni dialogue**

Engineer Alia Abdel Hamid believes that the process of ending the war and making peace in Yemen depends primarily on the Yemenis themselves, with their various sects and their political and regional components, as everyone rallying around the issue of ending the absurd war and beginning peacemaking will only take place with the real realization of all parties because making. A sustainable peace will never happen in the presence of this difference and rivalry, the international envoys will not have any role in finding a solution as long as all parties are unaware that they are the first and last cause of the conflicts that occur, and that all of them gather around one table for agreement is the only way out to end the war and make peace. On the other hand, negotiations and mediation will not help in making peace, and wars and conflicts will not end in the presence of this division, fanaticism and regionalism.

### **Expansion of the Quartet committee**

Dr. Ahmed Al-Mikhlaifi supports expanding the circle of the Quartet committee to include Turkey, Qatar and Iran, and thus if those countries agree with Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, America and Britain, the war will end on its own.

### **Media awareness towards community coexistence**

TV presenter (Mohamed Mansour) says: “As I said earlier, the conflict in Yemen is no longer at the Yemeni level, but rather has transcended to the regional and international level as well. Despite this, I still believe that ending the conflict is in our own hands, we Yemenis, and this requires the availability of real will on the part of all Yemeni forces to make peace in Yemen, and this will not happen as long as there are regional and international parties feeding this conflict, and to achieve this, civil society organizations and political parties must work to create awareness among the people of the country, specifically among women, youth and tribes, of the importance of ending the conflict and peacemaking in Yemen so that these

segments can be a supportive tool to end the conflict and create opportunities for peace. Perhaps the ideal mechanism for this is to walk from the bottom of the pyramid and towards the top of the pyramid, meaning that the awareness process begins at the level of Uzlas and districts, and then the governorates and the country as a whole. In this context, Ishraq Yahya believes that getting out of this tunnel will only come by uniting the ranks, strengthening the social fabric, working on reunification and spreading awareness among all members of Yemeni society that there is no salvation from war without unity and the solidarity of all, working hand in hand, accepting each other and believing in their right to this country which is owned by all and accommodates all, even if the visions differ. It is important that the goal be the same which is the freedom, independence and construction of Yemen.

Since all envoys, whether former or new, affirm that ending the war in Yemen is in the hands of the Yemenis themselves, and that the success of the peace process or a comprehensive political settlement requires comprehensive participation (civil society organizations, political parties, women, youth, tribes), and here comes the third question about the opinion of the respondents about the practical/ realistic mechanism to achieve effective and achievable participation in the negotiations to end the war and build the peace process? There was division over the formulation of this question in principle; some see that societal participation in order to end the war is an unrealistic perception. This approach cannot create a hole in the wall of ending the war; the role of the participants will be similar to that of the UN envoys, which is to mediate between the parties to the conflict to accept visions and solutions.

### **Opponents of inclusive participation**

Dr. Nabil Al-Sharjabi says this is one of the biggest fallacies in the subject of the conflict in Yemen, and this proposition does not depart from the existence of some

interests of the parties to the conflict or in the United Nations to make the most of the financial capabilities available for this file. Since the conflict in Yemen is of the type of protracted conflict, it will not be resolved except through military action or international political action. Dr. Ali Al-Asali agreed with this view, who said: "I believe that envoys leave all peaceful civil activities, as these people do not make peace on the ground, they can create ideas and visions to formulate peace, but they cannot be implemented in reality unless the warring parties are gathered exclusively at a negotiating table under the supervision of the UN envoy, presenting ideas to them and agreeing on what is possible and applying it, then the warring parties may be convinced and make a comprehensive and sustainable peace. Similarly, Dr. Al-Mikhlaifi agrees with them in his opinion that: "The role of political organizations and community organizations comes later for the sake of making peace, but now it will be a waste of time and effort". This is consistent with the opinion of the representative of the marginalized (Noman Al-Hudhaifi), who said: "Although the participation of all the mentioned forces is important in making peace, I believe that the possibility of a political solution because it is war is no longer a national matter dependent on the legitimate desires of the two parties to the conflict and the Ansar Allah Houthi group as much as the decision to end the war is now in the hands of the regional and international parties that support the two sides of the conflict at home. Dr. Sadiq Al-Shamiri's opinion is the same. He said: "From my point of view, the war in Yemen cannot end with dialogue. Rather, one of the two parties must impose its power on the other to force it to choose peace, and if the victorious party believes in democracy and dialogue, it is able to engage everyone in a dialogue that will result in permanent peace".

### **Supporters of Inclusive Participation**

For supporters of inclusive participation, they consider it one of the most effective strategies to end the war and build the peace process. Hussein Al-Suhaili suggests

to the UN envoy to seek a Security Council resolution specifying the share of each component in the first track negotiations on stopping the war, peacebuilding and reconstruction. In this regard, engineer (Rehab) says: The parties must first agree among themselves with civil society organizations, youth, tribes and women by accepting the other in order to reach a formula that makes all parties satisfied without external interference and trying to develop solutions that satisfy all parties, through the work of an internal dialogue and obtaining approval from All the parties mentioned on all the terms of the agreement, then a public dialogue is held, attended by the UN envoy, and it is stipulated that all parties have a real desire to reform the current situation, and that is by choosing suitable people to build the peace process. Shukri Hussein believes, "In our complex Yemeni case, it is important for all parties to participate in any negotiations and not to neglect other parties, which have become with the elapse of days a force on the ground that cannot be ignored, such as the Transitional Council, for example. Moreover, the participation of all spectrums of society (political parties, women, youth, tribes) , has become an inevitable necessity, even though what is happening on the ground currently does not indicate a breakthrough in the crisis through a political solution despite the efforts made 7 years ago. In the same context, Adnan Hajar sees the solution in: Expanding the political process with the participation of civil society organizations, parties, political organizations, local groups and authorities in the political dialogues and deliberations led by the United Nations to stop the war and establish peace in Yemen, and this matter requires that all those groups that are required to be involved in the international and political process to fuse temporarily into one gathering under the banner of peace and the formation of a unified body to communicate with representatives and delegates of the United Nations as well as with the Secretary-General of the United Nations to demand that this assembly be officially endorsed in the Yemeni file and the political process,

even as an observer and assistant to achieve peace. In addition the assembly should be neutral and clear in its theses and contributions, and that the assembly be in constant contact with the UN envoy and that it cooperate with him and light the way for him to help him in facilitating his mission, and that the UN envoy adopt the ideas, visions and perceptions that the assembly presents through dialogue and discussion and that the assembly prepare a local, Arab and international activity plan, and to implement its plan in theory and practice, and not to succumb to any pressure from any of the warring parties or participate in the war with this or that party.

### **Revival of the House of Representatives**

Shura Al-Baadani believes that establishing inclusive participation will take a great deal of preparation and proposal of the participants and the place, and then suggests that the UN envoy revitalize the House of Representatives and work to gather it in the city of Al-Mahra; As it has not been affected much by the conflict, neither militarily, politically, ideologically, nor sectarianly, and thus the council will be representative of all the people, and it can be assembled as soon as possible..

### **Transparency**

Activist Iman Al-Shugaa believes that the UN envoy should sponsor a dialogue characterized by rules and laws that everyone abide by, and pay attention to the principle of the necessity of establishing peace in all Yemeni lands, but transparency must prevail by clarifying to public opinion the progress of dialogue and negotiations so that it becomes clear to the people the group that does not want peace. Amira Al-Hussam views the same opinion as "presenting everything that was mentioned in the peace and reconciliation process and ending the war through the media in a transparent and realistic way".

Finally, we move to the fourth question about the expectations of the respondents about the possibility that 2022 will be the year of achieving peace in Yemen?

Unfortunately, very few of those whose opinions were surveyed expected that 2022 would be the end of the war. This pessimistic view is due to the political and military complexity of the conflict, as mentioned in the first part of this analysis. However, the vast majority of those whose opinions were surveyed attributed their pessimism to the regional intervention, which sees that the end of the war has not yet come, and those regional countries are still in the stage of establishing their supporters on Yemeni soil by providing them with money and weapons. In addition to the previous justification; we can point to two main reasons that led to the poor performance of the previous envoys, which are that they followed only two tracks to stop the war:

- The first track: limiting the negotiations between the two parties to the conflict (the internationally recognized government and the Ansar Allah al-Houthi group) based on the provisions of Security Council Resolution 2216, limiting the negotiations to a bilateral negotiating framework, justifying the attempt to change the United Nations approach by involving a larger number or expanding participation that increases the complexity of the problem, but this approach proved to be a failure and did not achieve any breakthrough to stop the war.
- The second track: the involvement of civil society organizations and parties, while this trend was limited to consultations with some representatives of women's groups without giving them any role and not asking them to present initiatives that could be adopted in the negotiations in the first track (the two parties to the conflict), not to mention the lack of a clear vision of moving from the participation of Consultations lead to participation in negotiation, as well as spending a long time in the path of regional powers supporting the war without achieving any reliable results.

Those who contemplate the experience of working in these two tracks will find a kind of lack of clarity and frankness in the initiatives or approaches that are being put forward. That is, the lack of transparency in the results reached in the negotiations, or even in the consultations that took place with women's groups and parties.

According to the events and movement witnessed in the year 2021 and in light of the awareness of the complex and intertwined nature of the Yemeni conflict, and based on the opinion surveys that we conducted, many obstacles can inevitably face the UN envoy:

### **Obstacles to ending the war and building a sustainable peace process**

It includes two types of obstacles: regional and internal obstacles.

#### **Obstacles to Ending the War (Regional Reference)**

They are specifically reflected in the obstacles of Saudi Arabia and the UAE; As for Saudi Arabia's obstacles, it is represented in its pretexts to intervene in the war on Yemen; It is targeting, as it has repeatedly stated, in its war with the Houthis; Preventing Iran from establishing a group similar to Hezbollah in Yemen, as the presence of such a group represents a threat to its national security, and thus requires the Houthis to explicitly declare severing their relations with Tehran in order to stop the war, along with other demands in compliance with Resolution 2216 and the Gulf Initiative. Accordingly, Saudi Arabia will not support a UN resolution that ends the war before the Houthi Group in Yemen weakens or accepts those conditions, and because the Houthis, of course, will not accept these demands, the conflict will continue.

As for the United Arab Emirates, which withdrew its combat forces in 2019, it remains a strong player in the Yemeni scene, and therefore it constitutes an obstacle to ending the war no less than the size and complexity of the Saudi obstacle. This is based on its position on the Islah party, which it sees with Muslim



Brotherhood as two sides of the same coin and is perhaps - from its point of view - no less dangerous than the Houthis. In order to weaken Islah power, it formed alliances with military components in Yemen such as Southern Transitional Council and National Resistance led by Tariq Saleh, as it consider them as partners on the intellectual and political level. Thus, any peace agreement may lead to the empowerment of the Islah party, it is likely that the UAE will not support it, and in return for the difficulty of excluding the Islah party from the peace equation; By virtue of what it represents in the mass reality and its role in the political process; there is another impossibility that prevents the end of the war and thus the continuation of the conflict.

### **Obstacles to building sustainable peace**

#### **(Obstacles of internal Yemen fragmentation)**

The Yemeni conflict cannot be reduced to political, economic and regional factors only. If we want to search for sustainable peace, we have to think of more influential factors. Perhaps the most important dilemma for peace building in this context is related to the thought that represents the basis of development and community peace. No one can follow the distortions and manifestations of dismantling produced by the war inside Yemen in the Yemeni mind to deny what the media and other religious and cultural institutions have effectively contributed to in reproducing doctrinal ideas and ideological and separatist tendencies in harmony with the parties to the conflict, and thus ended the year 2021 while Yemeni society is witnessing a sectarian, political and national rupture, as well as the extent of what has been instilled in its psyche as a result of this destabilization of confidence in its national constants and in its republican and unitary principles. Hence, the internal lack of a single national vision constitutes a serious obstacle to ending the war. Perhaps this situation represents the biggest challenge to building a sustainable peace process.

## **Obstacles to the peacebuilding process**

Based on the briefings of the new UN envoy, Hans Grundberg, it became clear his approach to the consultations of the comprehensive political settlement process with stakeholders is not to search for partial solutions; This strategy has proven to be a failure, and therefore it will continue to arrange a practical way to gather all segments of Yemeni society in comprehensive negotiations aimed at ending the war and achieving sustainable peace. Meaning, the solution will only be seen through a complete political process that ends the war and ensures that it does not break out again, but this approach may create major obstacles that impede achieving any progress in building a sustainable peace process, and among these obstacles or possibilities that it may face in 2022:

1. The war has not stopped as a result of the failure to find any real pressure to stop the Houthi attack on Marib; then, their seizure of it will lead to an imbalance on the ground, which will undermine all the steps that have been made or will take place during the year 2022 AD.
2. Strengthening the influence of the Southern Transitional Council and its control over the entire southern governorates will create a new reality and this will be a mercy bullet for what remains of the Riyadh Agreement. Concerning the unity and sovereignty of Yemen.
3. The widening of the gaps and contradictions between the parties supporting legitimacy, and the failure to reach inter-agreements on a unified initiative for the process of stopping the war and building peace or a comprehensive political settlement will constitute another obstacle to the efforts of the United Nations and its new envoy.
4. Obstacle of time; The search for mechanisms for forming the second track and arranging for the participation of civil society organizations, parties, youth, women, tribes and the marginalized in the participation of the final

solution requires a long time, and if we take into account that these arrangements are made simultaneously with the continuation of the war, the UN envoy will not reach the formation of the components of the second track only after a time has passed when the facts on the ground have changed and become complicated, and then what was possible to implement before the formation of the second track becomes impossible after its formation due to the developments of the military situation on the ground and the change in the balance of power, which constitutes an obstacle to the peace process. To overcome this obstacle, the matter requires the complementarity and concurrence of the two processes of stopping the war and a comprehensive political settlement - that is, the two tracks of ending the war and a peaceful settlement.

## **Recommendations**

In light of looking ahead according to the review of the events of the conflict in Yemen in the past year 2021 and the movement that took place in the scene of efforts to establish peace, and based on the agreement of many of those whose opinions were surveyed, including academics, politicians, journalists and media professionals, on the failure of negotiation efforts based on the bilateral negotiation track between the warring parties. This was confirmed by many international analyzes and reports on the situation in the Yemeni war, and in the interest of presenting a practical vision stemming from an awareness of the factors affecting the achievement of peace in a comprehensive manner; It is possible to come up with a number of recommendations, in the hope that those in charge of the peace process will take them to contribute to achieving the goal of stopping the war and reaching a comprehensive political settlement on which a sustainable peace process will be built, the most important of which are: The necessity for the two

processes to stop the war (the first track) and to implement the mechanisms for forming the components (the second track) in a manner that is coherent and complementary; to end the war and find a comprehensive political settlement process (building a peace process), by making a breakthrough in 2022, through the following tracks:

- First track: working to stop the war; provided that this path is not limited to bilateral negotiations between the two parties to the war (Legitimate Authority and Ansar Allah); Rather, it extends to the supporting regional powers, especially Saudi Arabia and Iran, with the involvement of representatives from the emerging military forces on the ground, such as the Transitional Council, the Guardians of the Republic, and the Tihama Resistance which requires support from the Security Council and International forces that have powers to put pressure on warring parties as for necessity of stopping war.

- The second track: involving the real stakeholders in ending the war at the national and local levels, represented by: civil society organizations, political parties, women, youth and the marginalized. And based on the disclosure by the new UN envoy - according to his first and third briefings - about the implementation of the mechanisms of the second track or the parallel track; In light of this, we recommend the following:

- 1- Moving from the method of consultations without specifying roles and tasks for all the groups that were consulted, to a more effective method through which a peace entity is established that includes representatives of political parties and civil society organizations, including trade and professional unions, women and youth unions, tribes and the marginalized, provided that the selection of The representatives of that entity are civil groupings and the most widespread parties in representing society and having an impact on society and on the parties to the conflict.

2- This entity must be named the Civil Peace Negotiating Entity in Yemen, and meetings must be held between its representatives to consult with the facilitation of the United Nations envoy to reach an initiative agreed upon by all civil society representatives for sustainable peace in Yemen, provided that this initiative is taken as a basic paper for the first negotiating track.

3- The UN envoy should start taking practical steps to establish a civil peace group entity in Yemen in terms of determining the numerical strength of this grouping to include all civil forces and determining representation rates for each component of civil society organizations, political parties, women, youth, tribes and the marginalized, within a period not exceeding five months, preparing an agenda for its meetings, and submitting the necessary budget; And then asking the international community to provide the necessary funding for this gathering.

- Third track: adopting the transparency approach in building bridges of communication and channels of communication between the first and second tracks, through the following:

1. The United Nations envoy transmits all discussions and opinions between the two tracks (first and second) in a transparent manner, as well as informing both tracks of the decisions reached, and transferring what is reached in each track to the other track.

Or

2. Electing symbolic representatives from the civil peace negotiating entity (track two) among 3-5 individuals to attend the first track negotiation sessions as listeners or advisors, as well as giving the first track negotiators a picture of what is being discussed in the second track, in order to enable convergence of views and enable making a breakthrough in stopping the war and building a peace process in 2022.

Or

3. The UN envoy can arrange for the formation of the components of the second track through a comprehensive peace conference in which he invites representatives from all sectors of society (similar to the dialogue conference or the initiative of Jabbari and Bin Dagher), and that the conference come out with a unified vision to be adopted by the United Nations and a Security Council resolution is issued. It becomes a binding decision, Yemeni par excellence, and it cannot be outbid on by any of the parties to the conflict, taking into account the complexities of the political, social, sectarian and economic situation, and it will be a way out for all and saves everyone's face.