

<b>Country/entity</b>	Yemen
<b>Region</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>Agreement name</b>	Agreement between Yafa' tribes in Lahj and tribal leaders and local officials in Shabwah to protect roads connecting the governorates
<b>Date</b>	17 Nov 2016
<b>Agreement status</b>	Multiparty signed/agreed
<b>Interim arrangement</b>	Yes

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

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

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

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

<b>Stage</b>	Framework/substantive - partial
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Inter-group
<b>Peace process</b>	Yemen Inter-group Agreements
<b>Parties</b>	Yafa'ai tribes of Lahj, tribal groups in Shabwah and local officials from both Lahj and Shabwah
<b>Third parties</b>	-
<b>Description</b>	Short inter-tribal agreement providing for the protection of major highway routes connecting both Lahj and Shabwah governorates and other key access points in areas in surrounding governorates. The agreement addresses targeted conflict acts on the roads against travellers, calling for the handover of wanted persons involved in historic and ongoing acts and provides for committees to investigate these acts. There are also substantive measures to counter society or either of the signing tribes providing social cover for armed actors who have committed conflict acts on the roads.

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**Agreement document** [YE\\_161117\\_Agreement between Yafa' tribes in Lahj and tribal leaders and local officials in Shabwah to protect roads connecting the governorates\\_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

**Agreement document (original language)** [YE\\_161117\\_Agreement between Yafa' tribes in Lahj and tribal leaders and local officials in Shabwah to protect roads connecting the governorates\\_AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

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### Local agreement properties

**Process type** Informal but persistent process

**Rationale** Further research suggests that this agreement was part of series of deliberations among sheikhs and local security leaders in order to deal with historic and ongoing conflict acts on the roads. While this is an agreement which addresses the roads, it also substantively provides for bringing those responsible for conflict acts on the roads to justice. It is a well supported agreement between tribes from both Lahj and Shabwah, as well as by local officials, societal leaders and security leaders. As a local process, it holds retributive justice elements which are part of other inter-tribal agreement processes whereby the agreement provisions commit to bringing to justice and punishing those responsible for conflict acts, calling for society and tribal members to hand over perpetrators. The agreement also provides for inquiry committees from both parties to follow up on the acts addressed by the agreement.

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

No

**Link to national process: articulated rationale** No clear link described in the agreement text or in further sources.

**Name of Locale** Ataq

**Nature of Locale** Region

**GPS Lat/Long (DD)** 14.534560, 46.816374

**Participant type** Local armed group  
Domestic religious organisation/leader or other elder  
Regional state actor

**Mediator, facilitator or similar** No mention of mediator or similar

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## Local issues

### Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture)

Page 1, Preamble

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Page 1, Preamble

Praise be to Allah who said (And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression) and blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah who says ((The blood, wealth and honour of the Muslim are sacred to all Muslims)) and after:

Page 1, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

3 - Whoever is proven to have been involved in such acts, the tribe to which he belongs must hand him over to the authorities and not cover up for him, to carry out the penalty following Allah's law, which indicates that the blood [the killing] of the bandit is permissible.

### Grievance List

Page 1, Preamble

The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway, the last of which was the killing of the martyr Anis Abd al-Rab alAntari and the severe injury of two others on 31/10/2016, and the past outlaw acts of the sons of Yafa' and others and initiating formal procedures.

Page 1, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

1 - The people of Shabwah and Yafa', authorities and the tribes, recognize that they are one hand against those who carry out outlaw acts, looting, and killing on the highway mentioned above and all public roads.

Page 2, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

5 - The people of Shabwa and Yafa' affirm the continuation, and strengthening, of the bonds of friendships, brotherhood, and respect, and to work together to encounter hostile and intruding acts and events on our society that damage brotherhood ties and undermine the security and the stability of the community.

**Cattle rustling/  
banditry**

Page 1, Preamble

The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway, the last of which was the killing of the martyr Anis Abd al-Rab alAntari and the severe injury of two others on 31/10/2016, and the past outlaw acts of the sons of Yafa' and others and initiating formal procedures.

Page 1, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

1 - The people of Shabwah and Yafa', authorities and the tribes, recognize that they are one hand against those who carry out outlaw acts, looting, and killing on the highway mentioned above and all public roads.

2 - The people of Shabwa, authorities and the tribes, are committed to chase the suspects of outlaw acts and robbery...

Page 1, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

3 - Whoever is proven to have been involved in such acts, the tribe to which he belongs must hand him over to the authorities and not cover up for him, to carry out the penalty following Allah's law, which indicates that the blood [the killing] of the bandit is permissible.

4- The local, military, and security authority leadership in Shabwa governorate is committed to secure the public route that goes through Ataq, which was suspended according to the decision of the Security Committee at its meeting held on 16/12/2016 and fighting bandits.

**Social cover**

Page 1, The subject: agreement on the robbery and criminal activities on the Al-Abra highway...

1 - The people of Shabwah and Yafa', authorities and the tribes, recognize that they are one hand against those who carry out outlaw acts, looting, and killing on the highway mentioned above and all public roads.

2 - The people of Shabwa, authorities and the tribes, are committed to chase the suspects of outlaw acts and robbery, and not to harbour any wanted person, and any tribe that refuses to hand over wanted persons or harbour them, they are [considered] rivals of the Shabwa and Yafa' tribes, and the authority is not exempt from carrying out its duty to chase the suspects and arrest them.

3 - Whoever is proven to have been involved in such acts, the tribe to which he belongs must hand him over to the authorities and not cover up for him, to carry out the penalty following Allah's law, which indicates that the blood [the killing] of the bandit is permissible.