

Country/entity	Yemen
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Subayha Treaty
Date	23 May 2024
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes

Yemeni Civil Wars (1994) (2011 -)

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

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

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

Stage	Ceasefire/related
Conflict nature	Other
Peace process	Yemen Inter-group Agreements
Parties	Office of Sheikh Abdulghani Muhiuddin Ali Salah The Dignitaries, Sheikhs, and Elders of the Mudhayrah and Ras Al-Arah Districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scholars - dignitaries - tribe members including elders, sheikhs, notable individuals, - political and social figures, - individuals and groups
Third parties	-
Description	Short internal tribal agreement to resolve violence between two districts within the Subayha tribal area in the south of Lahj governorate. Substantively the agreement adopts customary, traditional community enforcement and Islamic law related mechanisms, with long clauses and provisions referencing god and lifting of social cover for those members of tribe or community that violate the agreement. The agreement calls for ending of violence and bloodshed between tribal members and contains provisions for respect for the rule of law and basic human rights references, as well as dealing with criminal acts and behaviours that may jeopardise the agreement.

Agreement document [YE_240521_Subaiha Treaty_EN \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language) [YE_240521_Subaiha Treaty \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties

Process type	Informal but persistent process
Rationale	Whilst the agreement has buy-in from the wider community and members of the tribe, there are no explicit references in the agreement text or in further sources suggesting the presence of an external supporting mechanism or dedicated body to this or other local agreements in the area. It appears the agreement is to be self-managed by the tribe, adopting community enforcement and leadership from notable tribal figures and sheikhs. There is clearly a culture and practice of local peace agreement making among Yemeni tribes generally and internally within tribes, and particularly in this part of Yemen. Sources suggest that Yemeni Defence minister cited this agreement as an example for other tribes and communities to build upon and follow as an example.

Is there a documented link to a national peace process?	No
Link to national process: articulated rationale	No clear reference to the national process in the agreement text or from further sources.
Name of Locale	Ra's al 'Arah district, Lahj governorate
Nature of Locale	Other
GPS Lat/Long (DD)	12.652000, 43.914720
Participant type	Local armed group Domestic religious organisation/leader or other elder Local community/civilian group(s)/civil society organisations
Mediator, facilitator or similar	No mention of mediator or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture)	<p>Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, who said, "And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and do not separate.</p> <p>And remember the favor of Allah upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together, and you became, by His favor, brothers." (Quran 3:103)</p> <p>Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, who said, "There is no faith for one who does not fulfill his trust, and there is no religion for one who does not keep his covenant."</p> <p>All the people of Subayha, including scholars, dignitaries, tribes, elders, sheikhs, notable figures, and those who follow them, whether individually or collectively, have signed this covenant in the name of Allah and His agreement, which includes the following:</p> <p>8. We pledge to support the oppressed and defend their rights, adhering to the words of Allah:</p> <p>"And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another" (Quran 35:18).</p> <p>9. This covenant is sacred in the sight of Allah, and it is binding without return as long as Allah is worshipped, the water is drawn, the raven is black, and people are bowing in prayer.</p> <p>We pledge to uphold this covenant and be ever-conscious of Allah in our dealings.</p> <p>11. This is our pledge, and anyone who betrays it will have to answer to Allah, who is the ultimate reckoner and witness.</p>
Grievance List	This was followed by targeting the security and stability of Subayha and attempts to drag it into chaos, conflicts, and divisions.

**Cattle rustling/
banditry**

No specific mention.

Social cover

7. We declare our disassociation from any individuals who act outside the law, belong to terrorist organizations, or promote drugs and harmful substances.

We will not support, defend, or harbor such individuals.

We commit to not sheltering or covering up these actions, and to turning them over to the judiciary for judgment.

All signatories pledge to oppose such acts.
