2020
The Yemen Exchange
An Intensive Online Course on Yemen
May 11 - 15

Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies
The Exchange Foundation

www.sanaacenter.org
The Fifth Yemen Exchange

Is an abbreviated intensive online version of the Yemen Exchange organized by the Sana’a Center and The Exchange Foundation.

The course is designed to provide unique access to information, perspectives, updates and analysis on Yemen for both those seeking to develop a working background on the country as well as those already thoroughly versed in its dynamics. During the five-day program conducted online, participants from around the world will listen to Yemeni analysts, academics, politicians, bureaucrats, business leaders and international experts to gain insight and a rare first-hand knowledge about the country from a wide range of perspectives.

Participants will have the chance to virtually engage with speakers both during the sessions and connect with speakers they wish to engage individually after the Exchange.

The sessions themselves – totaling more than 25 hours – will dive into several specific areas, including but not limited to: Yemen’s multifaceted conflicts, socio-political dynamics, internal divisions and alliances among parties to the conflict, the possibility of southern secession, military and political developments on the ground, the status of various armed groups, the regional battle for Yemen, the humanitarian and economic crisis, the potential impacts of the coronavirus as well as a variety of other topics.

Accepted applicants will be provided with the full list of speakers as well as details on how to securely access the course prior its start.

Request an application form via:
exchange@sanaacenter.org

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
May 4th, 2020
Applicants will be processed on a rolling basis
EXCHANGE AGENDA
Day One
Monday, May 11

14:00 - 14:30 Sana’a
07:00 - 07:30 EST

Introduction & course rules

FAREA AL-MUSLIMI
Chairman of the Sana’a Center and associate fellow at Chatham House.

14:45 - 16:45 Sana’a
07:45 - 09:45 EST

Who is fighting whom, where, and why?

This session will be a deep dive into political alliances, divisions and conflicts within Yemen. Analysts will elaborate on current frontlines, armed groups and local and regional actors as well as other stakeholders and unexplored roots of the war.

The panel will be further refined based on the input and needs of accepted participants.

MAGED AL-MADHAJI
Co-founder and executive director of the Sana’a Center and regular commentator on Yemen for Arabic media.

ABDULGHANI AL-IRYANI
Senior researcher at the Sana’a Center. Prior to joining the Sana’a Center, Al-Iryani was a political and development advisor for many INGOs and international organizations in Yemen, including the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, UNDP and the World Bank.

JAMILA ALI RAJAA
Chair of the Sana’a Center advisory board. She is a former Yemeni diplomat with the status of ambassador, senior analyst, lecturer and policy consultant, including for the UN and several European foreign agencies.
17:00 - 19:00 Sana’a
10:00 - 12:00 EST

The war visualized

In this session visual data specialists will explain Yemen’s conflict(s) with 30 maps, notably illustrating frontlines and networks of political elites in Yemen.

**GHAIDAA AL-RASHIDY**
Researcher and visual data specialist at the Sana’a Center.

**ANDREA CARBONI**
Research analyst at ACLED and PhD candidate in geography at the University of Sussex, focusing on political elites in the MENA region.

**WALEED ALHARIRI**
Director of the US office for the Sana’a Center and fellow at the Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute. *Facilitator*
Day Two
Tuesday, May 12

14:00 - 16:00 Sana’a
07:00 - 09:00 EST

**Economic developments**

This session will examine current and post-war challenges facing Yemen’s economy. It will focus on the impacts of war, the coronavirus pandemic and aid cuts on Yemen’s economic and humanitarian situation. Speakers will also explore the role of the war economy in preserving the status quo.

**AMAL NASSER**
Economist at the Sana’a Center.

**ANTHONY BISWELL**
Economic analyst at the Sana’a Center.

**RAFAT AL-AKHALI**
Former Yemeni Minister of Youth and Sports and co-founding Partner at DeepRoot Consulting.

**OSAMAH AL-RAWHANI**
Deputy executive director at the Sana’a Center.

*Facilitator*
16:15 - 17:30 Sana’a
09:15 - 10:30 EST

**Impacts of the war on gender**

This session will explore how women, girls, men and boys have experienced the conflict differently, and how conflict is reshaping gender norms in Yemen.

*YASMEEN AL-ERYANI*
Non-resident fellow at the Sana’a Center, focusing on educational issues, and a PhD candidate in social anthropology at Tampere University in Finland.

*HANNAH PATCHETT*
Editor at the Sana’a Center and co-author of the Center’s report on the gendered impact of the war.

*SHAMS SHAMSAN*
Researcher at the Sana’a Center and co-author of the Center’s report on the gendered impact of the war.

*NADIM HOURY*
Executive director of the Arab Reform Initiative (ARI).

*Facilitator*
17:45 - 19:00 Sana’a
10:45 - 12:00 EST

Armed groups

Using maps and other visuals, this session will cover the status and activities of non-state armed groups currently active in Yemen’s civil war, including AQAP and ISIS, and their role in post-war Yemen as well as foreign counterterrorism operations inside Yemen.

GREGORY JOHNSON
Non-resident fellow at the Sana’a Center, focusing on armed groups in Yemen, and former member of the Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council on Yemen.

MOHAMMED AL-BASHA
Communications and Client Engagement Manager and the Yemen Subject Matter Expert at the Navanti Group, and former spokesman for the Embassy of Yemen in Washington, D.C.

PETER SALISBURY
Senior Yemen analyst at Crisis Group, associate fellow at Chatham House and a former journalist.

HOLLY TOPHAM
Is a researcher and editor at the Sana’a Center.

Facilitator
Day Three
Wednesday, May 13

14:00 - 15:15 Sana’a
07:00 - 08:15 EST

The future of the Yemeni state

KHALED BAHAH
Former Prime Minister and former Vice President of Yemen.
Keynote Speaker

FAREA AL-MUSLIMI
Chairman of the Sana’a Center and associate fellow at Chatham House.
Facilitator

15:30 - 17:00 Sana’a
08:30 - 10:00 EST

Local and tribal politics in Mahra

AHMED NAGI
Non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Middle East Center.

VICTORIA SAUER
Paris-based researcher at the Sana’a Center.
Facilitator
17:15 - 19:00 Sana’a
10:15 - 12:00 EST

**The regional fight for Yemen**

This panel will analyze the role of key regional actors with a stake in the geopolitical fight for Yemen and examine the policies and interests of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman and Qatar.

**ELANA DELOZIER**
Research fellow at the Washington Institute, focusing on Yemen, Gulf politics and nuclear proliferation

**MUSTAPHA NOMAN**
Former Yemeni diplomat and former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

**THOMAS JUNEAU**
Non-resident fellow at the Sana’a Center and assistant professor at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa, focusing on Iran and Yemen.

**SAMA’A AL-HAMDANI**
Non-resident fellow at the Middle East Institute and analyst for several Arab and Western media outlets and think tanks, focusing on political dynamics in Yemen.

*Facilitator*
Day Four
Thursday, May 14

14:00 - 15:30 Sana’a
07:00 - 08:30 EST

The Houthis and Salafis from an academic perspective

MAYSAA SHUJAA AL-DEEN
Non-resident fellow at the Sana’a Center where her research focuses on religious sectarianism, political transformation and Yemen’s geopolitical role in the region.

LAURENT BONNEFOY

MONIKA BOLLIGER
Is the co-founder of the Sana’a Center Geneva Association and formerly worked as a Middle East correspondent for a Swiss newspaper.

Facilitator
15:45 - 17:15 Sana’a
08:45 - 10:15 EST

The Houthi movement perspective

HOUTHI REPRESENTATIVE

17:30 - 19:15 Sana’a
10:30 - 12:15 EST

The STC perspective

AIDEROUS AL-ZUBAIDI
President of the Southern Transitional Council (STC).

JAMILA RAJAA
Facilitator
Day Five
Friday, May 15

14:00 - 15:00 Sana’a
07:00 - 08:00 EST

Update on Hudaydah Frontline

15:15 - 16:15 Sana’a
08:15 - 09:15 EST

The Shabwa battle and the fight over the south

This session will examine the current situation in Shabwa, one of Yemen’s most underreported but strategically significant governorates in Yemen's conflict(s). It will focus on local dynamics, natural resources and the role of the governor of Shabwa. The speaker will also explore why the STC lost its battle with the government in 2019.
16:30 - 19:00 Sana’a
9:30 - 12:00 EST

**Filling in the gaps and wrapping up - Q&A**

In this session, Sana’a Center’s experts will provide a debrief on the previous sessions. Participants will also be given space to ask any further questions that might have remained unaddressed.
Exchange Details

- All costs related to The Yemen Exchange are funded by participant fees, except for scholarships provided by both organizations (see below). There is no supplementary government or private sector support, a fact that allows us to assure participants of a relatively neutral platform for the exchange of information, open dialogue and understanding.

- All sessions are held under the Chatham House Rule with some sessions consisting of only one speaker in order to assure as open and unfiltered a discussion as possible in the context of a very sensitive topic. Simultaneous translation to English will also be provided when needed.

- Prior to the beginning of the course, accepted participants will receive a course syllabus as well as maps, visuals, and other informative materials. Those interested will also be connected with the experts and speakers to follow up with them for their own work and research.

- Applying for a scholarship – The Yemen Exchange currently has five scholarships (covering the conference fee) available for researchers who will deepen the social, political and geographic diversity of the Exchange and who can demonstrate both a lack of institutional or self-funding ability and a deep interest in Yemen. For any questions related to scholarships or to request an application with more information, email exchange@sanaacenter.org.

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REQUEST AN APPLICATION FORM VIA EXCHANGE@SANAACENTER.ORG