

## Answer to a Question

### **Sweden's Agreement and its Repercussions on the Tragedy of Yemen**

(Translated)

#### **Question:**

On 18/12/2018, France 24 website reported: "Clashes broke out in the city of Hodeidah in Yemen between the forces loyal to the government and the Houthis, minutes after the ceasefire agreement brokered under the United Nations was concluded..." (France 24,18/12/2018). On 17/12/2018 Arabic.Sputniknews website reported: "A member of the delegation of Ansar Allah said that the Sweden agreement did not include the handing over of the Hodeidah port or the exit of the Houthis from the city, to which the Yemeni Minister of Information Muammar al-Iryani responded by saying that these statements are understood as a coup against the agreement itself, which its signature's ink did not dry up yet (still fresh), stressing that the agreement stated the withdrawal of the militias from Hodeidah and its ports, Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa."

The question is: How is there a dispute in the text of the agreement when the ink of its signing is still fresh?! And how can clashes break out minutes after its implementation? So why is there an American and British welcome to the agreement? Is the tragedy of Yemen expected to end with this agreement? May Allah reward you.

**Answer:** Before going into the subject of the Sweden agreement, which its talks began on Thursday 6/12/2018 and ended with an open hand shake on 13/12/2018, the Yemeni situation should be summarized as follows:

**First**, after the Houthis seized control of Sanaa and after the actual expulsion of Hadi's government from the capital, and the taking control of most of Yemen, they became in dire need of some kind of "legitimacy" to their rule. America was trying to get them "legitimacy". But this was not easy, since the political center in Yemen is greatly pro-British, so the greatest aspiration of America was the acceptance of the Houthis as an active part of the political map of Yemen. The Houthis are a minority in northern Yemen especially in Saada, and they have no acceptance among the general public, so America worked to support the Houthis to become an active player in Yemen so that no rule would continue without them, and this was by the following steps:

1- It made Saudi Arabia attack by the air operation "decisive storm", not to eliminate the Houthis; otherwise, they would have deployed ground forces, but to show the Houthis as the defenders of Yemen in front of warplanes, appearing as oppressed and at the same time heroes, and therefore gain popular acceptance and public opinion.

2- Hadi, the Yemeni president loyal to the English, was made as a captive in Saudi Arabia, and thus they can easily put pressure on him whenever the plans required.

3- It influenced the Security Council to send envoys to Yemen loyal to America, and succeeded in this, thus, Jamal bin Omar, and Ould Cheikh were sent.

Britain, which has been influential in Yemen for decades, knows that the movement in the south and the Houthis in the north are the tools of America to penetrate its overwhelming influence in Yemen. By the entry of the Houthis into Sanaa and the rest of Yemen and their access to significant Iranian military support, Britain saw that its influence in Yemen began to shake, especially after the Saudi role in Yemen, so Britain rushed to respond to America's plans and tools:

a- The role played by the UAE parallel with that of the Saudi role. Indeed, the UAE played a decisive role in restoring the city of Aden and the rest of the cities in the south from the hands of the Houthis, and by this role it created a southern movement that neutralized the American agents

in the movement and made their role secondary, and secured the south.

b- It introduced the old agent, Ali Saleh, in the north on the line of the Houthis. He became their ally and in their ranks, so that Britain share the role with the Houthis if they take power, and he almost succeeded in his mission before they assassinated him.

c- It worked hard to send a UN envoy loyal to it, and it was able to do so, so British Martin Griffith was appointed as a new international envoy in Yemen.

**Second:** Britain knew that the backbone of the Houthis is Iran's support. After the closure of Sanaa airport and the control of the southern ports, the port of Hodeidah became the only semi-Iranian artery to support the Houthis. This is why the UAE went to Hodeidah to control it. Attitudes and battles around Hodeidah were facing a major US rejection under humanitarian pretext, and that the port of Hodeidah provides Yemen with aid to millions of Yemenis as if America had a consideration for humanity. It trampled with its agents in Syria under the United Nations with the siege of the suffocating cities and with explosive barrels.

But it wanted to find justification to keep the port of Hodeidah open to Iranian military support, which for a year or more included the ballistic missiles that the Houthis have launched on Saudi Arabia, as well as the drones launched on targets in the UAE. In contrast, Saudi Arabia was maneuvering its aircraft without the actual striking of the Houthi bases, for example Houthi forces besieged Taiz and the positions of its military forces were exposed to air control and so those bases were not difficult to hit and lift the siege, yet the siege is still in place! The UAE was actually fighting the Houthis until it almost drove the Houthis out of Hodeidah if it wasn't for the American pressure through Saudi Arabia!

Thus, America's plans and tools did not meet with Britain's plans and tools. America was inclined toward a political settlement after it guaranteed the Houthis' control over important parts of Yemen. Britain was waiting for more defeats of the Houthis to accept the withdrawal, which would make them return to Saada's Square before going to the actual political settlement. Therefore, all the previous negotiations were nothing more than political "games" to pass the time. Therefore, such talks were unsuccessful, such as the Kuwait negotiations and the Geneva negotiations in early September, when Houthi delegation did not even arrive...etc. Thus, the negotiations failed and the Houthis stopped in the face of the great dangers of the imminent takeover of Hodeidah and its ports by the UAE-backed forces, after they were on their outskirts. In the meantime, the most prominent role was for the UAE, which mobilized and recruited local militias for the battles of Hodeidah. Saudi Arabia was in an embarrassing position; it could not reject this Emarati direction because they are "allies" on the surface in the Yemeni war against the declared goal of the Houthis! And because the United States prevents the attack on Hodeidah, the UAE, and behind it Britain, chose a time when America was engaged in a more pressing issue to it. The battles of Hodeidah broke out on 8 and 9/6/2018 (Alhurra 10/6/2018) at a time when America was heavily engaged in preparation for the Trump Summit with the North Korean leader held in Singapore on 12/6/2018.

That is, it chose a time when America is almost paralyzed from stopping the attack. And so it was... the United Nations Security Council failed to stop the Hodeidah battles: "The United Nations Security Council failed on Thursday to agree to an immediate suspension of an attack by the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on the city of Hodeidah." (Al Jazeera Net 15/6/2018). The Hodeidah battles and the possibility of the control of the United Arab Emirates and the militias backed by them on the port of Hodeidah were the greatest threat to the rule of the Houthis in Yemen. Therefore, the Houthi mobilized all his forces to prevent it from happening, and America mobilized its officials to lament on the humanitarian situation in Yemen and on the fact that Hodeidah port is the lifeline to stop the famine in Yemen. The UAE and its local allies were waiting for international opportunities to launch more attacks and try to advance on the ground leading to the imposition of the reality on the ground on the city and port, which was achieved in part and became a major threat to the Houthis and hence America's next influence in

Yemen. In recent months, intermittent battles around Hodeidah have become the most dangerous part of the Yemeni war. In particular, America has not been able to disengage the Saudi-Emirati alliance in Yemen, nor can it stop the war from Saudi Arabia's side alone, including the damages as a result on the Saudi leadership role of the Gulf states, and the situation remained in place until the issue of the great embarrassment for Saudi Arabia, which followed the brutal assassination of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in early October 2018.

**Third:** the assassination of the Saudi journalist Khashoggi in Istanbul led to the surfacing of new circumstances around Saudi Arabia that could be employed for US interests:

1- The Saudi security services carried out a brutal act in their consulate in Istanbul, which led to an international campaign against Saudi Arabia, implicitly and sometimes publicly, calling for accounting Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman for carrying out a heinous act against any human values. Although Saudi Arabia and other criminal rulers in the Muslim region have committed worse atrocities against its citizens than the assassination of a Saudi journalist in Istanbul, but this act has provided enough emotional sentiments, which have led to many countries' strongest condemnation. The European countries wanted to use this to weaken America's agent, Bin Salman, or to remove him from power if possible, but America was quick to provide the international cover up to Bin Salman, through President Trump's tweets expressing confidence in what the Saudi crown prince says, thus removing away the accusation. Trump said openly that he would not give up arms contracts with Saudi Arabia due to the benefits of curbing unemployment in the United States, which increased the pressure of Congressmen in Trump's administration, which accused it of selling what Congress members call "American values" for Saudi money. The Congress then issued a rare historic rebuke for President Donald Trump's defense of Muhammad Bin Salman: (In a rare historic rebuke to President Donald Trump, the US Senate voted on Thursday to end US military support for the war in Yemen and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman was held responsible for the killing of the journalist. Saudi Jamal Khashoggi ... In a historic step the Senate voted 56 to 41 to end military support for the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen. (Reuters 14/12/2018)

2- When many members of Congress expressed concern about the need to stop dealing with the Saudi Crown Prince, "the loyal American agent" and some called for stopping arms supplies to Saudi, which Trump boasts by, for the impact it has on the creation of jobs in America, Trump's administration then rushed to distract attention from focusing on Khashoggi's case and accusing Saudi Arabia of it to another important issue that shows that Saudi Arabia stands with human rights, peace and security, and that it cooperates with the United Nations. The son of Salman's cooperation was promoted during the Swedish talks: "United Nations' Antonio Guterres is expected to attend final talks in Sweden in support of the efforts of his peace envoy in Yemen to start a political process to end the on-going four-year war. The official Saudi Press Agency said that Guterres phoned Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman to discuss "the latest developments in the Yemeni arena, and efforts exerted on them." (Reuters, 12/12/2018).

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, focused on Bin Salman's contribution: The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres revealed to Al Arabiya channel on Thursday the role played by the Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin Salman, in Yemen's historic agreement today between Ansar Allah and the Yemeni government ... UN Deputy Spokesman Farhan Haq told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York on Thursday that Guterres felt that the Crown Prince's contribution "was very important to the outcome of the consultations" (Arabic.Sputniknews 13/12/2018). Thus, America highlighted his role remarkably to the extent to which Griffith was obliged to praise this role: Griffith said in a videoconference from Jordan that the negotiating Yemeni parties succeeded in reaching a deal and he added: "I thank the Crown Prince, his Royal Highness Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, who has confirmed his vital and personal support for this process (Al-Watan News 14/12/2018) All of this shows that America was interested in holding the agreement for three reasons:

**First:** improving the image of Saudi Arabia, and the **second:** removing the international embarrassment from Saudi Arabia and covering up the issue of the Saudi journalist, and the **third:** blackmail Saudi Arabia financially! This is most important one to Trump ... America certainly does not want to improve the image and remove the embarrassment for the eyes of its agents Mohammed Bin Salman and his father, but by this act it will appear to have saved them from "trouble" and then exploit it in the "suction" of more money from the Saudi oil as a price for removing the international embarrassment from them, and this fits Trump's commercial "extortionist" mentality based on the policy of "pay us"!

3- What indicates this US interest in conducting the agreement is what is issued by officials in America as well as the drafting power of what was issued, including:

"The United States called for a cease-fire in Yemen within 30 days, stressing the need to stop the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia, bombing civilian populated areas in Yemen. Defense Secretary James Mattis called on the parties to the Yemeni conflict to cease fire within 30 days, And to enter into serious negotiations to end the war in the country. Mattis said, during a speech at a seminar organized by the American Institute of Peace in Washington, on Tuesday: ("For a long-term solution we want a cease-fire, withdrawal from the border, and the cessation of aerial bombardment... All parties involved in the conflict in Yemen should sit at the negotiating table in the next 30 days." "He stressed that" warring parties in Yemen must move forward towards peace efforts, "he continued:" We need to do that during the next thirty days, and I think that Saudi Arabia and the UAE are ready to proceed with the matter." (Gulf Online 10/31/2018)

- The United States sent Secretary-General of the United Nations Guterres to attend the negotiations of Sweden and pressure the negotiating delegations to ensure reaching of an agreement or the beginning of an agreement, and not leave things to the British International envoy Griffith: "UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is scheduled to attend the final talks in Sweden in support of his envoy's efforts for peace in Yemen to start a political process to end the war that has been going on for nearly four years." (Reuters 12/12/2018).

- Saudi Arabia's pressure on Yemeni President Hadi to accept the offered agreement: sources told Al-Jazeera that Saudi Arabia pressed the Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi to guide the delegation of the Yemeni government in the consultations of Sweden to agree to a cease-fire agreement in the city of Hodeidah and its port. The sources reported that the government delegation submitted a paper to Hadi, who "lives in Riyadh", recommending not to sign the agreement because it does not explicitly stipulate that the Houthis will leave the city of Hodeidah and its ports, but the Yemeni president was directed to sign it after severe pressure from Saudi Arabia over the past few hours, according to the source (Al-Jazeera.net 13/12/2018)

- Hastily appointing a UN General to monitor the cease-fire in Hodeidah: "The United Nations, chose a Dutch general, to head a ceasefire monitoring mission between the Yemeni parties. The United Nations envoy to Yemen, Martin Griffith, said the retired Dutch general, Patrick Cammaert, had agreed to lead the monitoring mission in Yemen and added that Cammaert could arrive in the region in a matter of days." (Yemen News 14/12/2018). Yemen's opinion website published on 20/12/2018: "UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said, the chairman of the committee, retired Dutch general Patrick will travel to Jordan tomorrow on Thursday, then to Sanaa and from there to Hodeidah .."

- America's public welcoming of the agreement. US Secretary of State, Pompeo welcomed the agreement, saying that: "peace is possible in Yemen" (BBC 14/12/2018). He said in a statement: "These consultations between the Republic of Yemen Government and the Houthis marked a pivotal first step... Peace is possible. All parties have an opportunity to build upon this momentum and improve the lives of all Yemenis Moving forward, all must continue to engage, de-escalate tensions, and cease ongoing hostilities." (Yemeni Scene 14/12/2018)

- The US Ambassador's striking contact with the Houthis: "US Ambassador to Yemen, Matthew Toller, said during his attendance at the conference and the negotiations in Stockholm:

"We held an official meeting between the ambassadors and a group, including a member of the Houthi delegation ... In my own way I had contact with some individuals in the Houthi team in a place that you describe as beautiful, it is a really beautiful meeting." He was asked if the meeting was direct and official with them, he said: "Any meeting I hold is official, I am the US ambassador to Yemen 24 hours a day" (Saudi Arabia, Middle East, Arab News 13/12/2018).

**Fourth:** Although the agreement of Sweden was under American pressure and then it welcomed it as mentioned above, Britain also welcomed it because America created a pressuring loud public opinion about the humanitarian motives and tragedies of famine in Yemen and the diseases of children as a result of wars and the dead and wounded etc..., as if these things have arisen today! Thus, the atmosphere created by America to conclude the agreement left no choice for Britain but to welcome it, but in its way to ride the wave to change its destination or at least to ease its speed, it welcomed the agreement: The British Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, welcomed the ceasefire in Yemen ... British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt praised the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy to Yemen, Martin Griffith, in a tweet on the British Foreign Office's Twitter website ... (Yemen Net 18/12/2018)

At the same time it submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council to discuss the agreement on the pretext of how to implement it:

"Britain is seeking another UN Security Council resolution and presented the draft resolution to the Council for discussion," British delegate to the UN Karen Pierce said: "As the holder of the Yemen file at the UN Council, the UK will resume working with all colleagues in the Security Council resolution to ratify the agreements reached by the parties, support their implementation and enable the United Nations to monitor the compliance of the parties and to put forward the next urgent steps." (Yemen Youth site quoting the British government site 14/12/2018).

- On Tuesday, diplomats said: The UN Security Council is studying a British draft resolution that asks UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to submit proposals by the end of this month on how to monitor the ceasefire in Hodeidah, and Britain has circulated the draft resolution to support the agreement in the Security Council. It is not clear when it will be put to the vote, where the resolution needs 9 votes in favour and no use of the veto right by the United States or France or Britain or China or Russia ... (Al Ain News 18/12/2018)

The British presented this project as its excuse to be involved in the agreement on the pretext of how to control and implement and withdraw, to prolong it, so the conflicting parties in the land of Yemen do not worry about the number of dead from its people and the size of destruction in its structure but to achieve their interests. Therefore, we can say:

America and its allies in the region, especially Saudi Arabia, are serious about ending the Yemeni war today and head to negotiations leading to a significant share of Yemen's rule for the Houthis, the followers of Iran and therefore the followers of America. The seriousness of this was seen by holding the Sweden negotiations. But this American approach does not mean that America can achieve it under the great English influence in Yemen. Britain sent its Foreign Minister to Sweden's negotiations on 13/12/2018 to support its international envoy Griffith in front of his President Guterch, the Secretary-General of the United Nations; this is why the agreement was limited to Hodeidah only, and the other files, especially Sanaa airport, were postponed to future rounds. Also the positions of the government delegation were also skeptical of the implementation of what was reached, indicating that it was under the pressure of Saudi Arabia and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and America behind them.

al-Yamani said during a press conference held at the conclusion of negotiations in the Swedish town of Rimbo that the Yemeni government had concluded 75 agreements with the Houthis, but they did not abide by them. He accused Houthis of refusing to lift the siege on the city of Taiz ... With regard to the Sanaa airport file, al-Yamani said that the government was ready to open it to international flights through Aden airport, but the Houthis rejected this initiative. Al-Yamani said that "the project to end the coup begins from Hodeidah." He said the United Nations

and the international community bear the responsibility to force the Houthis to implement the agreements on Hodeidah and prisoner exchange ... Commenting on Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres announcement of plans of holding a new round, he said: "New consultation rounds should not be contemplated unless the current agreed one is implemented." (Russia Today 13/12/2018). All this opens up the door for a great deal of evasion from the agreement during implementation and the delay in holding other rounds.

Therefore, it is likely that the implementation of the Hodeidah agreement will be difficult, as indicated by the clashes that took place on 14 and 15 and 16/12/2018 on the outskirts of Hodeidah, shortly after the declaration of the Sweden agreement, which the United Nations was forced to justify: UN source said: "While the Hodeidah Agreement states an immediate cease-fire, it is normal that the issue takes 48 to 72 hours for orders to reach the operation field ... We expect the ceasefire to be implemented from Tuesday." (Reuters 16/12/2018)

Thus, it is expected that the situation will continue to go forth and back. On the one hand, America wants to close the military scene, especially in Hodeidah and its ports, and then move on to political solutions with the survival of the Houthis "voice" as in Hodeidah. On the British side, there are pretexts to continue fighting to achieve as much as possible to weaken the Houthis and to silence them in Hodeidah before heading for a political solution.

**Fifth:** As for the last question (and is it expected that this agreement will end the crisis of Yemen?) It is as follows:

This agreement does not solve the crisis in Yemen due to the conflict of interests of America and Britain and their local tools that signed it. The maximum result from it is some calm as a rest of a warrior and then things will heat up again, and may in the way of capitalists contain a compromise as a shared rule according to the balance of the forces on both sides. And of course, this does not end the crisis; that is, the events in Yemen will continue to fluctuate, calm down, and then flare up again according to the balance of political and military forces in the conflict. What will end it is one of two things as we mentioned in previous publications:

**The first** is that America or Britain can resolve matters in its favour and dominate the influence in Yemen. This is far from being achieved, as we have already explained.

**The second** is closer with Allah's permission that Allah honours this Ummah with the Khilafah (Caliphate), so that the influence of the Kuffar and the colonists will be uprooted from the country and their evils will be eliminated among the people. And so the kufr and its people will be humiliated and Islam and Muslims will be honoured and the believers will rejoice in Allah's victory

﴿وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِنَصْرِ اللَّهِ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

**"And that day the believers will rejoice \* In the victory of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful"** [Ar-Rum: 4-5]

And the people of Yemen, the people of Iman and wisdom, must evaluate this matter to win in both Worlds, and Allah is the supporter of the righteous.

**13 Rabi' al-Akhar 1440 AH**

**20/12/2018 CE**