



Ressort: Politik

## The war in Yemen and key indicators of the Flow of Fuel

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The war in Yemen and the resulting humanitarian crisis have resulted in a dramatic situation in the country with over 18,557 civilian victims between March 2015 and November 2020. Six years of conflict have forced more than 4.3 million people, including more than 2 million children, to leave their homes, and it is estimated that 80% of the population - 24.3 million people - is in need of humanitarian assistance.

The conflict in Yemen has its roots in the 2011 Arab Spring, when an uprising forced longtime president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi.

The political transition was supposed to bring stability to the country, which is also one of the poorest in the Middle East, but it did not. Since then, the situation in Yemen has deteriorated. President Hadi has faced various attacks from military forces loyal to Saleh, growing food insecurity and a rampant economic crisis. The fighting in Yemen began in 2014 when the Houthi Shia Muslim rebel movement took control of the northern province of Saada and surrounding areas.

The Houthis continued to attack and took the capital Sanaa, forcing Hadi into exile abroad. The conflict escalated dramatically in March 2015, when Saudi Arabia and eight other states - mostly Sunni Arabs - backed by the international community - launched airstrikes against the Houthis, with the stated aim of restoring the Hadi government .

Saudi Arabia justified its intervention in Yemen by claiming that Iran is supporting the Houthis with weapons and logistical support - an allegation Iran denies. The conflict thus became part of a series of regional and cultural tensions in the Middle East between Shiites and Sunnis.

Since the violence broke out, conditions for the people in Yemen have rapidly deteriorated, bringing the country to the brink of famine and economic collapse. The shortage of food, drinking water, sanitation and health care, as well as the spread of massive epidemics of cholera and diphtheria, have weighed on the living conditions of civilians and deprived families of basic needs.

Despite the ongoing conflict the flow of fuel into Yemen from 1 April to 31 May 2021 continued at a rate higher than the normal rate compared to the same period in 2019 and 2020. The quantity of fuel imported totaled, according to [www.secyemen.org](http://www.secyemen.org), 1,053,266 metric tons, which is sufficient to cover all civilian and humanitarian demand in all parts of Yemen

for around three months.

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The government continued implementing its decrees concerning the regulation and organization of the fuel trade in Yemen, Decree No. 75 of 2018 and Decree No. 49 of 2019.

It also facilitated the import of fuel through the liberated ports and its transportation over land into the areas under the control of the Houthi militias after the Houthi militia men looted the government revenues that had been collected. These revenues which were allocated for fees and customs on fuel imports, included the revenues from the shipments that were granted exceptional permits to enter through Hudaydah Port over the past period, and they totaled more than seventy billion Yemeni rials.

The Houthi militias looted the accumulated revenues and the funds were not used to improve the humanitarian or living conditions of civilians.

The percentage of fuel imported into the areas under the control of the Houthi militias made up 65% of the total fuel imported into Yemen, and this quantity is sufficient to cover the civilian and humanitarian needs in this areas for a periods of more than three months. One has to take into account that there's a very spread, unregulated black market because the Houthis continue to hinder the flow of fuel through over land transportation.

Traders are forced to sell this fuel to the black market which is managed by the Houthis.

Diverting fuel to the black market aims at creating a fuel shortage and exploit the humanitarian suffering that this causes for political gain. In any case, the effort by the internationally recognized government is to facilitate the import of as much fuel as possible as a sign of detente and support for the exhausted Yemeni population.

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