



[Yemen's Warring Parties Agree to Extend Their Truce for Another Two Months](#)

In the preceding days, peace activists and observers of the longstanding conflict in Yemen have welcomed the news that the warring parties in the embattled country agreed to extend the existing truce by another two months until early October. This happened just hours before the now four-month long ceasefire was due to expire. The agreement to extend the truce also “includes a commitment from parties to intensify negotiations to reach an expanded truce agreement as soon as possible,” according to United Nations Special Envoy on Yemen Hans Grundberg. It seems apparent that both sides of the conflict are beginning to reevaluate their circumstances and may be more open to finding a peaceful resolution. However, there are still some stipulations that have yet to be adequately addressed. Despite these challenges, the overarching truce has continued to hold, to the relief of many aid workers and activists, Yemeni civilians, and others. It is hoped that its extension will allow for further important efforts to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Currently, there are some notable challenges that remain in place. One of the main demands of the Houthis are that the Yemeni government contribute to civil servants’ salaries in areas that are under their control and that Sanaa Airport allow flights to additional destinations. The Yemeni government, has in turn, demands that the Houthis lift their siege on the city of Taiz. There is also the issue of truce violation accusations taking place on both sides, with reports of limited clashes in certain areas. Even in the face of these issues, some analysts have speculated that the relative restraint from the leaders of the two groups may indicate that both sides are ready to end the fighting for good and are willing to work past these obstacles.

The Yemeni conflict began in late 2014 and has devolved into the worst humanitarian crisis in contemporary times. Hundreds of thousands have died, both directly and indirectly from the fighting. Most troubling is that many of these deaths have been innocent civilians killed as a result of indiscriminate bombing campaigns and desperate humanitarian conditions. An enduring cessation of hostilities and fighting would allow for more much-needed aid to flow into Yemen, greatly improving the lives of civilians. In fact, most observers have noted that the ongoing four-month long truce has provided positive developments, with aid agencies reporting that civilian casualties have dropped significantly after the implementation of the truce. Additionally of great importance, the halt in fighting paves the way for humanitarian flights to fly in and out of Yemen, allowing those in desperate need of medical attention to be evacuated to hospitals that are better equipped to provide them with the necessary treatment.

The outstanding issues make it apparent that Yemen is still a long way from a permanent peace, but an extension of the truce indicates that both sides are open to finding a peaceful resolution. A note of caution still remains among aid groups though. Eric Hutchinson of the Norwegian Refugee Council commented that, “After seeing swift and decisive action towards the success of the truce in the first months, progress towards meeting all of its elements has slowed. We hope this two-month extension will allow for the reopening of roads linking cities and regions, enable more displaced people to return to their homes safely, and ensure humanitarian aid can reach people who have been out of reach for far too long because of hostilities.” It will remain to be seen whether this extension will allow for more areas to be reopened, or if it is merely a brief moment of respite for the Yemeni people before they are thrust back into the dangers and uncertainties of conflict.