
Chronology of Key Events in the Modern History of South Yemen

1839	Britain first occupies the port city of Aden.
1904	Ottoman-British borderline drawn, separating the Ottoman North from South Yemen, where the British sign protection treaties with many sheikhs and sultans in regions surrounding Aden colony.
1959	British declare Federation of South Arabian Emirates around Aden colony, and push a wider federal scheme in the early 1960s as part of their plan to leave the South.
1963	Start of South Yemen's revolution; guerrilla warfare is used to expel British forces.
1967	South Yemen wins national independence from Britain.
1969	Marxists form the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, nationalizing property in the South and prompting the old ruling class to flee into exile.
1972	First border war with North Yemen.
1979	Second border war with North Yemen.
1981	Draft unity constitution signed with North Yemen.
1984	First oil discovered in Yemen on northern side of the border, creating incentives for joint exploration and further talks of unity.
1986	Violent intra-regime battle in Aden among factions of Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) formed in the late 1970s. President Ali Nasser Muhammad is overthrown and flees country with thousands of refugees, dimming the prospects of unity with the North.
1990	North and South unify, creating the Republic of Yemen. North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh becomes the new country's president; Ali Salem al-Beidh, general secretary of the YSP, becomes vice president. Other southern YSP members hold equal share of cabinet seats with northern colleagues.
1993	The unified Yemen conducts its first national parliamentary election. Al-Beidh leads YSP to a third-place finish, then attempts to restructure the country along federal lines with the YSP maintaining regional autonomy in the South.

1994	Jordanian-brokered Document of Pledge and Accord (DPA) followed by North-South civil war exactly one year after Yemen's first national parliamentary election. Saleh's northern forces triumph.
2001	President Saleh permits Yemen's first local elections, but these do not satisfy southern citizens, who demand more democratic rights. In late 2001 a group of prominent figures forms the "Public Forum for the Sons of the Southern and Eastern Provinces" in an attempt to press the president to resolve regional grievances.
2007	Southern Movement begins peaceful protests after retired army officers hold sit-ins.
2008	Rising violence in southern provinces as the regime seeks to repress the Southern Movement; Saleh allows indirect election of provincial governors, but this fails to end the protests.
2009	The leader of al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula declares support for the Southern Movement and the goal of an independent southern Islamic state. A prominent former member of the Arab-Afghan <i>mujahideen</i> and son of a former southern sultan joins the Southern Movement's leadership. Clashes between government and opposition grow more violent.