



# ICRD Monthly Update

August 31, 2016

## Yemen, a Tough Nut to Crack



Last month, ICRD launched its latest report, *A Fractured South: Addressing Separatism and Other Challenges Amidst Yemen's Political Tumult*. Based on extensive field research conducted in concert with our indigenous partner, Partners Yemen, this report offers unique insights into the challenge of building peace in Yemen's southern region.

To ensure these insights inform policy and practice, ICRD presented the report in a policy forum on Capitol Hill, which brought together State Department officials, key Congressional staff, Yemeni activists and NGOs. Through a rich roundtable discussion, these disparate voices grappled with the challenge of how best to include the marginalized communities from the south in the ongoing political transition. The report has also been shared with top-level Yemeni policymakers.

*"It is by far the most in-depth piece of research on the South I have had the pleasure of reading."*

– Officer at European Institute of Peace

*"You are giving voice to the voiceless.... Words can't explain our gratitude"*

– Southern Yemeni activist

Meanwhile, at the grassroots level, ICRD has been working with local Yemeni civil society organizations (CSOs) to empower religious, tribal, and other community leaders in resolving local conflicts, addressing violent extremism, and promoting religious tolerance in their communities. The goal is to provide an alternative to the militants, who otherwise step in to fill the vacuum.

*"We have thought that the government should be responsible for addressing violent extremism, but now through this training we also see there is so much that we can do to address it through civil society."*

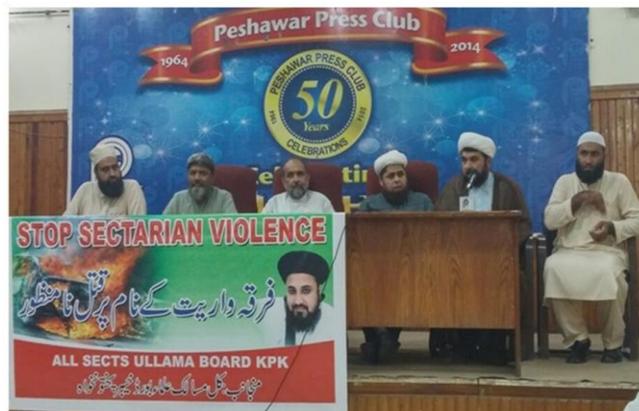


## Pakistan, Every Bit As Tough

ICRD's work to reduce sectarian conflict in Pakistan also took a major step forward last month at a five-day workshop in which prominent regional leaders from differing Muslim schools of practice joined in (1) developing a narrative of shared values and religious understandings that can counteract calls for divisiveness, and (2) issuing public statements that encourage tolerance over violence. In addition, Mualana Tahir Ashrafi, Chair of the Pakistan Ulema Council and a key ICRD partner from the Deobandi school, began identifying national-level leaders who he will seek to enlist in collaboratively defusing future outbreaks of inter-sect conflict.



Planning Committee strategy session



Religious leaders and scholars addressing the workshop

*"[The workshop brought together] scholars belonging to different schools in unity and respect. As they sat listening to different opinions, they were able to freely and fairly express their views; and there was no bitterness in the air, but rather a genuine togetherness."*

*-Islamic Times,  
July 26, 2016*

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With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas Johnston".

Douglas Johnston  
President, ICRD



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