



# Case study: Yemen country risk

*December 2010*



(map source: Wikipedia)

In order to assess country risk for Yemen, we used our software **mergeflow.stream** to monitor the following risk factors in publicly available news feeds (each factor particularly with respect to Yemen):

- proliferation and arms trafficking
- infrastructure
- terrorism
- corruption
- Hamas
- pirates

Among others, **mergeflow.stream** automatically identified the following specific **risk topic threads** for Yemen:

- extreme water shortage expected in 2025
- Saracen International builds up a private anti-piracy army in Somalia; this is associated with suspected arms trafficking through / from Yemen.

# 1. Our goals

For our analysis of Yemen country risk, we had the following goals:

- What other countries are most associated with or affected by Yemen country risk?
- What are specific current risk topic threads associated with Yemen?

# 2. Our method and data

In order to address our question, we used mergeflow.stream, our software for analyzing news streams.

We set up news search feeds from a range of publicly available search engines, including Google, Bing, Yahoo, and Icerocket. The search feeds covered the following risk factors:

- proliferation and arms trafficking
- infrastructure
- terrorism
- corruption
- Hamas
- pirates

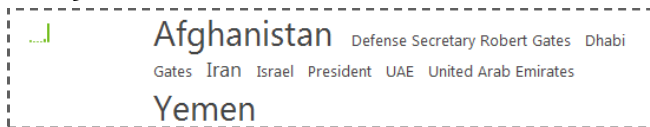
We analyzed news data from November 2010 until 10 December 2010.

# 3. Our results

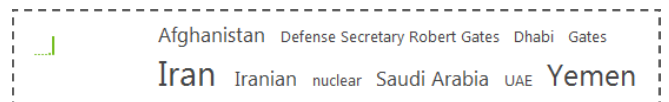
## Other countries

mergeflow.stream can automatically assign news events to countries in which they take place. The screenshots from mergeflow.stream below show the countries most associated with or affected by Yemen country risk. The green sparklines besides the tag clouds show news volume over the second week of December. The increase toward the end is due to WikiLeaks-related news. The size of the keywords reflects news volume (bigger font = more news).

### Afghanistan



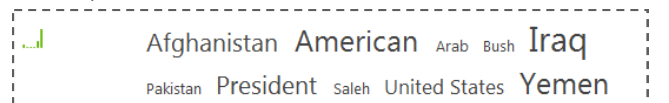
### Iran



### Sudan



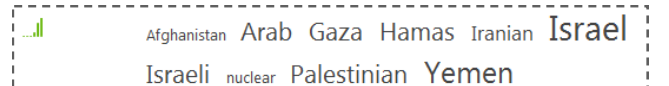
### Iraq



### Somalia



### Israel



**Somalia**

Afghanistan Africa Afrik Americans AQAP Arabian arms Bush Cole Defense Secretary Robert Gates Department Dhabhi DVD Gates Global Gulf of Aden Houthi International Iran island Kabul killed militia Muslim Nahyan OCEAN One8 - Lyrics owned Pakistan Pentagon piracy pirates President PST ABU DHABI Puntland Qaida regional maritime Robert Gates Saada Saudi security Socotra Somali Somali pirates Somalia strategic UAE UN United United Arab Emirates United States US video Wanta Washington weapons Wikileaks Yemen Yemeni Zayed

6 documents tagged with the keyword **Yemen**.

- Medeshivalley.com: Gulf of Aden Security Review - December 8, 2010**  
 ...Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) member Fahd al Quso was designated as a global terrorist by the U . S . State Department and the UN on Tuesday . His designation as a global terrorist will cause all of his assets to be frozen . Quso was imprisoned in Yemen from 2002 - 2007 for his involvem... 2 hours ago => [www.medeshivalley.com](http://www.medeshivalley.com)
- Updated: Yemen weapons trafficking, destabilizing the region for a decade | Armies of Liberation**  
 ...Oh gee , that pretty much matches exactly what the US embassy found in 2009 regarding Yemen ' s weapons smuggling from Eastern Europe to Hamas and others . In 2005 , the article was translated into Arabic , photocopied and passed out by hand in some areas . Many in Yemen were surprised by its accura... 23 hours ago => [armiesofliberation.com](http://armiesofliberation.com)
- Yemen diverted US counterterrorism aid meant to tackle Al Qaeda, WikiLeaks reveals - CSMonitor.com**  
 ... " Increasingly desperate to defeat the Houthis , the [ Yemeni government ] continues to insist that fighting the Houthis is a legitimate component of CT [ counterterrorism ] operations , thus justifying the use of CTU forces in Saada , " reads the State Department cable . " Untrained to fight this t... 16 hours ago => [www.csmmonitor.com](http://www.csmmonitor.com)
- Alshahid Network » Yemen-born alshabab fighter killed in Somalia**  
 ...Officials with the UN - backed Transitional Federal Government ( TFG ) claimed that a Yemeni - born foreign fighter named Rabah Abu - Qalid was killed during heavy clashes Sunday in Mogadishu ... 23 hours ago => [english.alshahid.net](http://english.alshahid.net)

# Specific current risk topic threads

## Expected water shortage

In news on Yemeni infrastructure, mergeflow.stream automatically identified „water“ as one relevant topic. The screenshots from mergeflow.stream below show news on an expected water shortage in Yemen:

The screenshot shows a Google Blog Search window for the query '+yemen infrastructure'. The search results include a feed of various topics, with 'water' highlighted in green. Below the search results, a document is tagged with the keyword 'water'. A specific search result is highlighted with a dashed box and an arrow pointing to a larger view of the article. The article is titled 'WASH news Middle East & North Africa' and features a photo of a person carrying a water bucket on their head. The article text discusses agricultural water shortages in Yemen and the predicted water shortages in the capital Sana'a by 2025.

1 document tagged with the keyword water.

Yemen: capital 'will run out of water by 2025' | WASH news Middle East & North Africa  
...cholera climate change corruption desalination drinking water drought Euphrates river groundwater overexploitation GTZ irrigation Japan Middle East S0803 - MENA S0806 - MENA

### WASH news Middle East & North Africa

HER WASH BLOGS

← Arabs to face severe water shortages by 2015 | Yemen: Japanese funding for small-scale rural water projects →

#### Yemen: capital 'will run out of water by 2025'

Posted on December 9, 2010 | Leave a comment

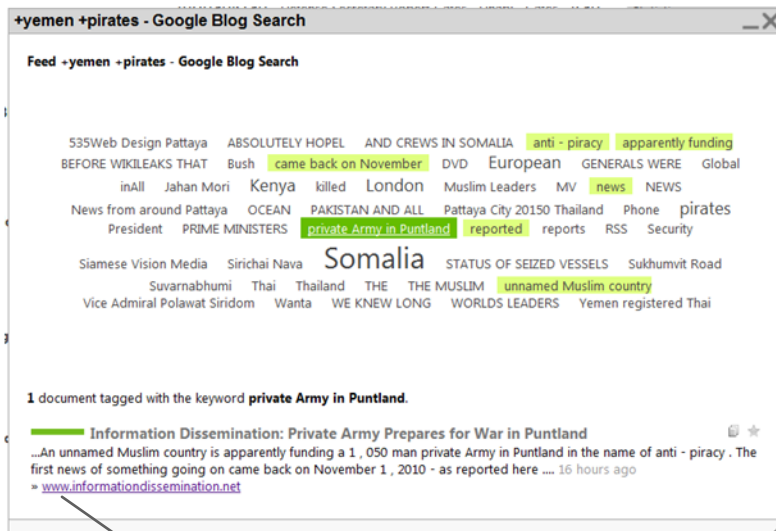
Agricultural water shortages in Yemen could result in 750,000 job losses and a drop in incomes by a quarter within a decade, according to a report by international consultants McKinsey.

*Poor water management and the enormous consumption of water for the farming of the popular stimulant khat [or qat] are blamed for the predicted water shortages, which experts say could lead to the capital Sana'a running out of water by around 2025.*

The McKinsey report, commissioned by the Yemeni government, identified ten governmental priorities for the next decade.

## Arms trafficking, private anti-piracy army buildup in Somalia

From news on pirates in Yemen, mergeflow.stream automatically identified „private army in Puntland“ as potentially relevant topic (see screenshots below). Note that the system was not explicitly tuned to look for this topic, just like it was not explicitly tuned to look for „water“ as potentially relevant in infrastructure news.



Tuesday, December 7, 2010

### Private Army Prepares for War in Puntland

An unnamed Muslim country is apparently funding a 1,050 man private Army in Puntland in the name of anti-piracy. The first news of something going on came back on November 1, 2010 - [as reported here](#).

Bososo sea port has been seen a ship carrying vessel of weapons to puntland government as reported Horseedmedia.

Witness are saying that they have seen Vehicles with artillery and armed Wagons down lauding from the Vessel named Noora Moon 1, which registered in Panama.

It is not known, where the ship comes from, but residents are reported that it is part of struggle to empower puntland government's forces as to keep security.

..

Furthermore, ATOM is reportedly involved in arms trafficking into Somalia. Information from a number of sources indicates that his forces receive arms and equipment from **Yemen and Eritrea**. According to a December 2008 report, an eyewitness described six such shipments during a four-week period in early 2008, each sufficient to fill two pickup trucks with small arms, ammunition, and rocket-propelled grenades. According to a Bossaso businessman familiar with the arms trade, ATOM's consignments do not enter the arms market, suggesting that they are either retained for the use of his forces or are transferred to recipients in southern Somalia, where al-Shabaab operates.

Associated with the private army buildup: arms trafficking through / from Yemen.

In order to pursue this further, we added other search feeds to mergeflow.stream, searching for news related to the Puntland anti-piracy army. The screenshot from mergeflow.stream below shows initial results from a simple Google Blogsearch feed that we added. Shown are documents from this feed that mergeflow.stream automatically tagged with „Somalia“:

**+puntland +"anti-piracy" - Google Blog Search**

AM anti anti - piracy anti - piracy militia apparently funding Army in Puntland assist the government  
 Brooks capacity in order CIA claim Cole company comprehensive program Copyright © 2010 vBulletin  
 Department embarked enjoy automatic translations government illegal fishing marine resources  
 Mogadishu Ndesanjo Macha MyWeku news operations partnership Photo of Somalia photo of the week  
 piracy pirates Powered by vBulletin™ private private Army in Puntland Puntland region Puntland territorial  
 Puntland to build Recent news reports regain control rights reserved Solutions Somalia  
 Specifically a company territorial waters Thanks to NLP times are GMT UN United States unregulated  
 vehemently denies waters

**4 documents tagged with the keyword Somalia.**

**Somalia 's anti - piracy war triggers UN and US concern - Afrik - news . com : Africa news ,**  
**Maghreb news - The african daily newspaper**  
 ...The European Union Naval Force , in the meantime , have warned that Somali pirates currently hold 22 ships and 521 crew . Whilst analysts say the multinational naval force patrolling the East Africa waters has limited capabilities to end Somali piracy .... 7 hours ago  
 » [www.afrik-news.com](http://www.afrik-news.com)

**The secret Somalia anti-piracy force | FP Passport**  
 ...An un - named Muslim country is funding the creation of a well - armed and privately trained militia force in Somalia 's north to fight piracy , the AP reports today . And behind the scenes consulting are the George W . Bush administration 's former ambassador at large for war crimes , Pierre Pros... 7 hours ago » [blog.foreignpolicy.com](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com)

**UN official glad about new Somali force but wary | The Daily Caller - Breaking News, Opinion, Research, and Entertainment**  
 ...Pierre Prosper , a former U . S . ambassador - at - large for war crimes issues , earlier told AP he is being paid by a Muslim nation he declined to identify to be a legal adviser to the Somali government on the project . He said Saracen International is the contractor that is being paid by the unna... 7 hours ago » [dailycaller.com](http://dailycaller.com)

**Alshahid Network » US officials: Puntland hires anti-piracy security firm**  
 ...Washington ( Alshahid ) – Somalia 's semi autonomous state of Puntland has hired a private security firm to fight piracy but Washington is concerned about the program 's funding , aims and scope , AFP news agency quoted Pentagon spokeswoman Friday .... 7 hours ago » [english.alshahid.net](http://english.alshahid.net)

A few days later, on December 13, 2010, mergeflow.stream automatically identified „Saracen International“ as a potentially interesting topic. The screenshot below shows that Saracen International is the organization building up the Puntland private army. Note that the system did not „know“ that Saracen International exists. This shows that mergeflow.stream can help identify „unknown unknowns“: information that is potentially relevant but that one did not know might exist.

The screenshot displays the mergeflow web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Info', 'Demo', and 'My mergeflow'. Below this, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > My mergeflow > Dashboard [fw] > Profiles > Yemen country risk'. The main content area is titled 'Yemen country risk' and shows a list of documents. One document is highlighted with a green border:

**Terror Free Somalia Foundation: Salim Saleh's Saracen training militia in Somalia**  
 ...Saracen International, a security company associated with Uganda's Gen Caleb Akandwanaho, alias Salim Saleh, a senior advisor to President Yoweri Museveni, who is also his younger brother, has come under the international spotlight for its alleged involvement in training militia in Somalia' ... 4 hours ago > [terrorfreesomalia.blogspot.com](http://terrorfreesomalia.blogspot.com)

An inset window on the right shows the article from the blogspot site. The article title is 'Terror Free Somalia Foundation'. It includes a map of Somalia and a close-up photograph of a man's eyes. The date 'SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2010' is visible at the bottom of the inset.

## 4. Our conclusions

Our main conclusions were:

- Other countries most associated with or affected by Yemen country risk include Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Somalia, and Sudan.
- mergeflow.stream automatically identified the following specific current risk topic threads associated with Yemen : (1) expected extreme water shortage in Yemen, and (2) Saracen International builds up a private anti-piracy army in Somalia; this is associated with suspected arms trafficking through / from Yemen.
- The above-mentioned specific risk topic threads were identified by the system automatically, without any specific instruction to the system.

# 5. Contact information

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