

Beat: News

Yemeni president agrees to 72-hour ceasefire, foreign minister says

WORLD NEWS

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USPA NEWS - Yemen's President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi has agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire with the possibility of it being extended, Foreign Minister Abdel-Malek al-Mekhlafi said on his official Twitter account on Monday.

"The President agreed to a 72 hrs ceasefire to be extended if the other party adheres to it, activates the DCC (De-escalation and Coordination Committee) and lifts the siege of Taiz," he said.

The DCC is the United Nations-backed military commission responsible for overseeing ceasefires in Yemen.

Yemen's information minister tweeted that Hadi would meet with the U.N. special envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, on Thursday to determine a start date for the truce.

Hadi's exiled government has been requesting humanitarian access for Taiz, a divided city largely encircled by the Houthi rebels who overran Yemen's capital Sanaa in 2014. Government forces maintain control of only one of four access routes.

The Iranian-aligned Houthis and their allies, forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, hold most of Yemen's northern half, while forces loyal to the Saudi-backed Hadi share control of the rest of the country with local tribes.

Houthi officials could not immediately be reached for comment about the ceasefire.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said on Monday that Saudi Arabia was prepared to accept a ceasefire if the Houthis agreed to one, but that he was sceptical about peace efforts after previous ceasefire attempts had failed.

Saudi Arabia and several Gulf Arab allies have carried out air strikes and deployed troops in Yemen in support of Hadi's government since March 2015.

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