Briefly

Leader of Yemen's rebels urges peace

SANA, Yemen — The leader of Yemen's rebels who are battling authorities here called for a "peaceful transition," Tuesday. Transcribed his forces released a press statement whose affiliation set in motion a violent escalation that led to the resignation of the president and the government. The entire political class was plunged into turmoil.

Yemeni political and social leaders called for an immediate cease-fire, and pushed even to form an interim unity government to end the turmoil. The prospect of a new interim government for Yemen, which has been divided for decades, is the most hopeful development in the region in recent years.

Secret talks to win release of hostages

BEIRUT — Secret talks were held Tuesday in Jordan in the presence of a number of senior officials and journalists, and a British freelance journalist, and a Palestinian official involved in the Middle East peace process.

The secret talks were aimed at finding a way to end the siege of a U.S. diplomatic mission in Jordan, where a Palestinian militant group has been holding a number of American hostages for more than five months.

The U.S. government has so far refused to negotiate with the group, and has instead tried to pressure the Jordanian government to intervene on their behalf.

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