



General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 September 2020

English only

Human Rights Council

Forty-fifth session

14 September–2 October 2020

Agenda items 2 and 3

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Partners for Transparency, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 August 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

GE.20-12155(E)



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Enforced disappearance in Yemen

For over six years, since the Houthi militia declared its coup against the Yemeni legitimate government in September 2014, this militia has practiced grave violations against Yemeni population, and it continues killing and injuring thousands, destroying infrastructure, forcibly detaining citizens and severely torturing them. Hundreds of civilians are still dreaming of obtaining their stolen freedoms, and hundreds of Yemeni families are still searching for their relatives detained in the Houthi-controlled areas. From 2015 until now, the Houthis have committed 904 arbitrary detentions and 353 enforced disappearances¹, including 300 women who were kidnapped and forcibly disappeared, and these people are often subjected to further ill-treatment and torture².

Therefore, Partners for Transparency deplores and decries the Houthi militia's continued perpetration of human rights violations in Yemen, and calls on addressing the loopholes allowing for impunity, including the need to activate universal jurisdiction mechanisms by members of the United Nations, and to support conducting a full, deep and comprehensive criminal investigation led by the International Criminal Court to investigate these grave violations, and hold those responsible accountable.

Partners for Transparency believes that this appalling reality is the result of the continuous failure to put an end to the violations of the Houthis, and the failures of international justice to hold the Houthis accountable for their widespread and systematic violations of human rights and their crimes against the Yemeni people, including the crime of enforced disappearance. We also affirm that the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules provide valuable advice on a wide variety of issues, including prisoners' rights to communicate with the outside world, personal hygiene and medical care.

Escalation of enforced disappearance crimes in Houthi-controlled areas

The file of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance and torture is considered among the toughest conflict files in Yemen, with its great impact on society, especially since the Houthi militia rejects any form of control over places of detention, in which it practices arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, and detainees are subjected to all forms of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, such as slapping, kicking, burning, waterboarding, hanging, withholding water and food rations from them, preventing them from performing religious rituals, and other dignity-destroying practices, in addition to inhuman detention conditions.

On July 10, 2020, the security forces of the Houthi militia stormed the Nama Foundation in the city of Al-Aden, west of the Ibb governorate, and arrested four employees without providing any legal basis for the order and deported them to the buildings of Political Security in Ibb city without revealing any information about their situation³. In June 2020, Abu-Rami, the Houthi leader, attacked Al-Thawra Hospital in the Yemeni governorate of Ibb, assaulting the employees, arbitrarily detaining the hospital director and his deputy, and taking them to an unknown destination, against the background of the hospital's refusal to send ambulances to transfer the Houthi dead members to ceremonial places,⁴ and in the same month the Houthi militia arrested the businessman (M.M.A.), the owner of Red Sea Mills, after his car was intercepted in Haddah Street in Sana'a for unknown reasons, and his whereabouts have not been announced yet.⁵

Also in June, the Houthis arbitrarily detained the correspondent of Al-Masirah channel, speaking on behalf of the group (F. Al-Nahari) in Al-Saleh prison in Al-Hawban area west Taiz, based on a complaint related to his performance as a reporter for Al-Masirah television in Taiz. This coincided with preventing him from communicating with his relatives or his

¹ <https://bit.ly/2CawYLb> الاحتجاز التعسفي والاختفاء القسري حرب داخل الحرب اليمنية، على الدرج، يوليو 2020

² <https://en.calameo.com/read/00541878491c278eca47a> نساء اليمن في جحيم الحوثي، المنبر اليمني، أغسطس 2020

³ الحوثيون يقتحمون مؤسسة أهلية في إب وينهبونها ويخطفون موظفيها، المصدر أون لاين، يوليو 2020 <https://bit.ly/2Py4u1b>.

⁴ <https://bit.ly/2XX2JiL> مسلحون يقتحمون مشفى الثورة في إب ويخطفون مديره ونائبه، أخبار اليمن، يونيو 2020

⁵ <https://bit.ly/3fz6fpm> الحوثيين يختطفون رجل أعمال من شارع حدة بالعاصمة صنعاء، المشهد اليمني، يونيو 2020

lawyers⁶. And in May 2020, the militia arbitrarily arrested the teacher in the Media Department at Hudaydah University (W. S.) after he had condemned the Houthis detention of University students.⁷

In March 2020, the Houthi militia arrested seven school principals in the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, which is under its control, and took them arbitrarily to an unknown destination, including (S. Q.) the director of Al-Shahid Al-Samawi School and (A. Q.) the director of the May School⁸, and in January 2020, the Houthis stormed one of the classrooms at the University of Ibb and arbitrarily detaining⁹ a number of students, and in the same month, elements of the Houthis' Preventive Security arrested the girl (H. B.) and took her to an unknown destination, this comes in light of the militia's policies that work to arrest girls to blackmail their families, whether to obtain Political support or for money¹⁰.

In November 2019, the Houthi leader, Abdo Muhammad Al-Tawam, issued an order to detain the student (A. H.) from the city of Hajjah through a young woman working with the militia, and Z.A. was arrested after storming her home in the capital and taking her to an unknown destination during the same period¹¹. And in September of the same year, the journalist (S. S.) was arrested from a street in the capital, Sana'a, and taken to an unknown destination¹². In addition to the previous cases of enforced disappearance, these persons are subjected to multiple violations during illegal detention operations, including torture and extrajudicial killing and other violations and this will be covered in the next part of the intervention.

Violations against forcibly disappeared persons in places of detention

The testimonies of the families of the forcibly disappeared in Houthi prisons indicate the extent of the various violations they are exposed to, including torture, extrajudicial killings and other violations. On July 20, 2020, the mother of the forcibly disappeared (S.H.L) recounted the details of her son's enforced disappearance who was forcibly abducted on January 20, 2019 by three armed people belonging to the Houthi militia. She went on explaining the violations he suffered inside the prison during the period of his detention from preventing visits and communications or bringing food or money to him until his whereabouts was revealed in October 2019, and she was allowed to visit him. The young man was very thin and weak due to the lack of food, water and health care.¹³ In this context, the mother of the forcibly disappeared (M. A.) said that her son was beaten during his forcible detention on the background of a quarrel with a supervisor of the Houthi militia during the victim's sister's wedding in November 2019. The victim was then taken to Ibb's Political Security prison, where he is still being held until now without any information about his whereabouts¹⁴.

On December 30, 2019, Muhammad Salem Ibrahim, Ali Muhammad Ahmad Al-Mahmoudi, Saeed Ali Muhammad Al-Rajhi, Abdo Ali Ibrahim Sunbuli, and Nasser Zaid Abdullah Bahash, who are forcibly disappeared in the National Security Forces detention facilities in the city of Al-Saleh in Taiz governorate, which is affiliated with the Houthi organization, were subjected to severe torture and ill-treatment¹⁵. While the forcibly disappeared (A.T. Al-Sharabi) died in Al-Saleh Al-Houban prison due to the Houthis' continuous torture on May 8, 2020,¹⁶ while (B. Al-Siyaghi), the Yemeni poetess, was subjected to arbitrary disappearance at the hands of the Houthis, after her home was stormed. Al-Sayaghi said that during her groundless detention, she was subjected to torture, threats of rape and other

⁶ <https://bit.ly/2XFLLig> مراسل قناة المسيرة بتعز في سجن جماعة الحوثي، المشاهد اليمنية، يونيو 2020 ،

⁷ <https://bit.ly/3fCzjMB> الحوثيون يخطفون أكاديميًا في جامعة الحديدة، أرام نيوز، مايو 2020 ،

⁸ <https://bit.ly/2XHYPdb> الحوثيون يخطفون مديرات مدارس.. ويلوحون بتجنيد الشباب إجبارياً، حفریات، مارس 2020 ،

⁹ مسلحون حوثيون يقتحمون قاعة دراسية بجامعة إب ويخطفون طلبة من كلية القانون، المصدر أون لاين، يناير 2020 <https://bit.ly/2XFN7Qs>.

¹⁰ <https://bit.ly/3fGGAee> جريمة حوثية بشعة اختطاف فتاة من أسرة مرموقة في محافظة اب، أبناء اليمن، يناير 2020 ،

¹¹ <https://bit.ly/3ijK1cG> منظمة إرادة لمناهضة التعذيب والإخفاء القسري، الصفحة على الفيس بوك، 5 يناير 2020

¹² <https://bit.ly/3krxNk0> منظمة إرادة لمناهضة التعذيب والإخفاء القسري، الصفحة على الفيس بوك، ديسمبر 2020 ،

¹³ <https://bit.ly/3gIEA6A> المختطف (س.ح.ل) 24 عاماً محافظة الحديدة، رابطة الأمهات المختطفين، يوليو 2020

¹⁴ <https://bit.ly/3kAfbP4> رابطة أمهات المختطفين، الصفحة على الفيس بوك، 5 يوليو 2020،

¹⁵ منظمة إرادة لمناهضة التعذيب والإخفاء القسري، صفحة المنظمة على الفيس بوك، 30 ديسمبر 2019 <https://bit.ly/33LTRQm>.

¹⁶ <https://bit.ly/31xUkTF> منظمة إرادة لمناهضة التعذيب والإخفاء القسري، صفحة المنظمة على الفيس بوك، 8 مايو 2020

violations, explaining that she lost part of her eye due to the continuous torture at the hands of the Houthi militia.¹⁷

Recommendations

Partners for Transparency recommends the following:

- Activating universal jurisdiction mechanisms or any other forms of jurisdiction as stipulated under international and domestic law to investigate crimes committed by the Houthi militia, and to prosecute and hold accountable those responsible for criminal offenses against detainees.
- Pressuring the Houthi militia to cease arbitrary detentions, hide political opponents, journalists, and members of religious minorities, and ensure the safety of all detainees.
- Pressure on the Houthi militia to subject official and unofficial places of detention to control.
- Inviting the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to visit places of detention in Yemen, and to investigate the related violations and abuses.

¹⁷ برديس السياغي في حوارها البوابة نيوز المشهد الثقافي اليمني تراجع لـ100 عام. الحوثي حطم ما تم بناؤه تشكيل الزينبيات عذبي <https://bit.ly/30CqmP6> حتى فقدت القرنية، البوابة نيوز ، أغسطس 2020 ،