

Unofficial Translation by Human Rights Watch

Yemeni Republic
Foreign Ministry
Office of the Minister

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The Foreign Ministry of the Yemeni Republic Extends its Best Wishes to Human Rights Watch

In reference to your esteemed organization's letter dated March 22, 2017 containing a number of questions, titled "Houthi – Saleh Forces Use of Anti-Personnel and Anti-Tank Mines," the Ministry would like to affirm as follows:

- The Yemeni Government is vigilant in abiding by its commitments concerning the Ottawa Treaty to Ban Anti-Personnel Mines, in its capacity as a signatory to the treaty, and among the state's priorities as signed in 1997 and ratified in 1999. We would note that the Yemeni Republic was about to be announced the third state in the world to be free of land mines by 2015, having cleared 85% of mines as of the beginning of the events of 2011.
- As to the question about if anti-personnel mines have been planted in Yemen, for example "near Bab al-Mandab or Mukha, in the province of Taiz, or in Khor Maksar, Al-Basateen, the Green City or other areas of Dar Saad or Mas," the Ministry would like to confirm that neither the army nor the Popular Committees have any presence in the provinces of Aden and Abiyan, or some areas of the provinces of Taiz and Ma'reb, as terrorist groups, Aggression forces and their mercenaries control large parts of these areas.
- Armed factions and terrorist groups are reusing shrapnel and the remains of fissile and cluster-bombs dropped by the aircraft of the Aggression against Yemenis, and unexploded ordnance, to manufacture anti-personnel and anti-tank mines. Also, the impact unexploded ordnance from fissile and cluster-bombs is akin to the impact of mines, since they explode after various periods of time from launch.
- As to the Yemeni government's preparation to form committees to investigate the claims of the planting of mines in the province of Taiz, the government remains prepared to do so immediately upon cessation of the Aggression and when the appropriate security conditions have been met, in light of the difficulty of accessing these areas at the present time.
- The Yemeni Government confirms that there are no anti-personnel mines in the armory of the Ministry of Defense.

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- The Yemeni Government warns about the danger of the forces of Aggression planting mines along the western coastal strip, and the negative consequences to the safety of international navigation.
- The Yemeni Government confirms that it possesses none of the mines catalogued in the report, in terms of the types of mines cited and the country of manufacture, which contradict completely with the data regarding the mines (type and country of manufacture) previously possessed by the Ministry of Defense and destroyed between 2002 and 2007, in accordance with the government's commitments under the Ottawa Treaty (see the government's yearly reports).
- The government looks forward to being provided with any information or documentation of the use of anti-personnel mines, and their locations, for investigation, and to take the necessary steps in accordance with national laws and regulations and its international obligations, (see the Yemeni Government's submission to the fourteenth annual meeting of the state signatories in Geneva on November 28, 2015).
- The Yemeni government also confirms that it continues to follow and monitor any developments in this regard, and to coordinate with the organization [HRW].
- The Yemeni Republic, represented by the Supreme Political Council and the National Salvation Government, reiterates its principled position extending the Yemeni people's hand of just and honorable peace, and its readiness to sit at the dialogue table with its Saudi neighbor which leads the Arab Coalition against Yemen, in order to stop the war, and lift the total siege that has been imposed on Yemen's territory and people.
- In conclusion, the Ministry would like to point out that what the organization's report called "Houthi-Saleh forces" are the forces of the Army and Popular Committees, which is their official and recognized designation, and which operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Defense in the National Salvation Government.

The Foreign Ministry of the Yemeni Republic would like to take this opportunity to express its deepest appreciation for and warmest regards to Human Rights Watch.

To/
Human Rights Watch

[seal: Yemeni Republic, Foreign Ministry]