

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10118-3299
Tel: 212-290-4700
Fax: 212-736-1300

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DIVISION

Sarah Leah Whitson, *Executive Director*
Lama Fakhri, *Deputy Director*
Eric Goldstein, *Deputy Director*
Joe Stork, *Deputy Director*
Ahmed Benchemsi, *Advocacy and Communications
Director*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Asli Bali, *Co-Chair*
Kathleen Peratis, *Co-Chair*
Bruce Rabb, *Vice-Chair*
Gary G. Sick, *Vice-Chair*
Fouad Abdelmoumni
Gamal M. Abouali
Yasser Akkaoui
Hala Al-Dossari
Salah Al Hejailan
Abdul-Ghani Al-Iryani
Ahmed Al-Mukhaini
Ghanim Al-Najjar
Lisa Anderson
Shaul Bakhash
David Bernstein
Robert L. Bernstein
Nathan Brown
Paul Chevigny
Hanana Edwar
Bahey El Din Hassan
Hassan Elmasry
Mansour Farhang
Loubna Freih Georges
Aeyal Gross
Amr Hamzawy
Asos Hardi
Shawan Jabarin
Marina Pinto Kaufman
Youssef Khlaf
Ahmed Mansoor
Stephen P. Marks
Abdelaziz Nouaydi
Nabeel Rajab
Vicki Riskin
Charles Shamas
Sid Sheinberg
Sussan Tahmasebi
Mustapha Tlili

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Kenneth Roth, *Executive Director*
Michele Alexander, *Deputy Executive Director,
Development and Global Initiatives*
Nicholas Dawes, *Deputy Executive Director,
Communications*
Iain Levine, *Deputy Executive Director, Program*
Chuck Lustig, *Deputy Executive Director, Operations*
Walid Ayoub, *Information Technology Director*
Emma Daly, *Communications Director*
Barbara Guglielmo, *Finance and Administration
Director*
Babatunde Olujobi, *Deputy Program Director*
Dinah PoKempner, *General Counsel*
Tom Porteous, *Deputy Program Director*
James Ross, *Legal and Policy Director*
Joe Saunders, *Deputy Program Director*
Frances Sinha, *Human Resources Director*

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

www.hrw.org

June 5, 2017

H.E. President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi
President of the Republic of Yemen
Aden, Yemen

Subject: Treatment in Detention in Aden and Hadramawt

Your Excellency,

We write to thank your government for its continued dialogue with Human Rights Watch on promoting and protecting human rights in Yemen.

During our discussions with officials in Aden this February, we raised the issues of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and mistreatment of detainees. Human Rights Watch also requested permission to visit detention facilities in southern Yemen. We would be grateful if your government could facilitate such permissions for Human Rights Watch to visit detention facilities, including ones located in Aden and Hadramawt.

Since January 2017, Human Rights Watch has documented dozens of cases of individuals being arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared, many of whom appear to remain detained or unaccounted for, in Aden, Hadramawt, Lahj, and Abyan. We have documented allegations of mistreatment, including of children. Those detained are held in official and non-official detention facilities, including but not limited to:

- In Aden: the Central Prison, the Criminal Investigation Department, Camp Tariq, Bir Ahmed, and a detention facility in the Tawahi neighborhood;
- In Hadramawt: al-Riyan Airport and the Presidential Palace.

Human Rights Watch documented arbitrary or abusive arrests by multiple security forces, but most appeared to have been carried out by the forces known as the “Security Belt” in Aden and “al-Nukhba” in Hadramawt.

We seek further information on the above concerns, and kindly request a response by June 15, 2017, so that we may reflect Yemen's views in our upcoming reporting on these issues:

1. Could the government provide an update on the locations that Yemen is currently using as detention facilities, how many detainees are being held in each location, and how many of these detainees have had charges brought against them?
2. Have any investigations been undertaken into allegations of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or torture of detainees by officials? Please describe. Have any of those investigations led to prosecutions or other punitive measures? What additional steps are authorities taking to protect detainees from ill-treatment?
3. What role do coalition states, including the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, play regarding the security forces and ongoing arrests and detention in areas of Yemen under the government's control? Are any of the security forces, like the Security Belt or al-Nukhba, under the command of other states? Are there detention facilities in Yemen under the control of the UAE or Saudi Arabia?
4. Has Yemen transferred any individuals to the custody of other states inside or outside Yemen? If it has, what steps did Yemen take to determine that those transferred would not be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment?

As we have done in the past, we will endeavor to include the Ministry's full response in English and Arabic on our website.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kristine Beckerle, Yemen and Kuwait Researcher, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], should you have any questions.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to a positive response.

Sincerely,

Sarah Leah Whitson
Executive Director
Middle East and North Africa
Human Rights Watch

CC:
Mohammed Asker
Minister of Human Rights
Ministry of Human Rights
Aden, Republic of Yemen

Hussein Arab
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Aden, Republic of Yemen

Abdulmalek Al-Mekhlafi
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Aden, Republic of Yemen