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This submission for the 2023 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Yemen was prepared by the Justice 4 Yemen Pact coalition, with the leadership and support of the DT Institute.

Coalition Partners:



Justice 4 Yemen Pact: represents a coalition of human rights organizations and civil society actors that are united for the promotion and protection of human rights in Yemen. The coalition’s mission is to advocate for the rights of all Yemeni people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and marginalized.

Members of the Justice4Yemen Pact

1. [Abductees’ Mothers Association \(AMA\)](#)
2. [Al-Amal Women’s and Sociocultural Foundation \(AWSF\)](#)
3. [Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children \(CSWC\)](#)
4. [Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism](#)
5. [Marib Dam Foundation for Social Development \(MDF\)](#)
6. [Musaala Organization](#)
7. [SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties](#)
8. [Studies and Economic Media Center \(SEMC\)](#)
9. [Watch for Human Rights](#)
10. [Yemeni Coalition to Monitor Human Rights Violations \(YCMHRV\)](#)

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I. Executive Summary

1. As of 2021, Yemen's population was estimated to be around 33 million. Approximately 46% of the population is under the age of 15, while 2.7% is above the age of 65. Tragically, the country has been ravaged by a devastating conflict, often called the "forgotten war," which originated in 2014 and escalated into a full-fledged civil war by 2015. This ongoing violence, entangling local, regional, and international stakeholders, inflicts tremendous suffering on the Yemeni people. It has created an unparalleled humanitarian crisis, claimed countless civilians' lives, and contributed to widespread human rights violations perpetrated by all parties involved. Despite some progress made in April 2022 to advance negotiations in ending the use of violence to further various agendas, the country continues to be plagued by widespread violence and its devastating consequences.

2. Progress resulting from the April 2022 peace negotiations — which was prompted by President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi's decision to delegate his powers to a 'Presidential Leadership Council' as part of ally-backed efforts by Saudi Arabia to consolidate its military and political alliances in Yemen — created an opportunity for political negotiations between the internationally recognized government and Ansar Allah (otherwise known as Houthi) groups, facilitated by the United Nations. The recent humanitarian truce, which allowed for the reopening of Sanaa Airport to civilian flights, and the Saudi-led coalition's declaration to halt military operations are steps in the right direction. However, their practical impact on human rights and the overall humanitarian situation has been limited, giving rise to grave concerns.

3. According to the United Nations, Yemen currently faces the most severe humanitarian crisis in the world, with approximately two-thirds of the population needing food relief, healthcare, and shelter assistance. The number of displaced individuals in Yemen stands at around 4.5 million people.ⁱ Economic conditions have continued to worsen since 2022, with a significant collapse in the value of the national currency, exacerbated by the mismanagement of Yemeni resourcesⁱⁱ by all parties involved. Meanwhile, parties to the conflict also continue to violate or abuse the human rights of civilians. The Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition has monitored and documented thousands of cases of human rights violations since 2019, both before and after the ceasefire, via interviews with witnesses, victims, and families, document collection, site visits, and open-source investigations. Furthermore, there are growing signs that negotiations are breaking down and support for the resulting ceasefire is weakening, as evident in the military preparations showcased by the Ansar Allah military parade in Sanaa in September 2022 and by government forces in Marib.

4. The challenges posed by Yemen's divided governing apparatus further complicate and hamper progress in developing, implementing, and enforcing crucial human rights safeguards. As a result, Yemen has yet to make notable advancements towards fulfilling the recommendations it

ⁱ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/yemen-crisis>; <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen/>

ⁱⁱ <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-currency-devalues-historic-lows-exacerbating-hunger-needs-warns-irc>;
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/yemen/overview>

committed to since 2014, including those accepted at the outcome of its 3rd Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2019.

II. Yemen's Approach to the UPR

5. Yemen is a party to nine international human rights conventions, including the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention Against Torture (CAT), and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

6. The Yemeni government has actively participated in all three cycles of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and received a total of 592 recommendations, ranking Yemen among the top 10 states that have received the highest number of recommendations for promoting and protecting human rights through the UPR. The Government has consistently accepted between 79% and 86% of recommendations each cycle, accepting a total of 83% of the recommendations received since 2014. The top three areas of concern for the first three rounds of review have been women's rights with 23% of total recommendations, children's rights with 22%, and respecting the requirements of international humanitarian law with 10%. In the most recent cycle, Yemen accepted 197 out of 248 recommendations.

7. Of the ninety-eight recommendations that have only been noted by the Yemeni Government since 2014, 48 address cooperation with the Group of Eminent Experts established by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to examine and report on alleged rights violations and abuses, along with protections for human rights defenders, ratification of international human rights treaties, and promoting the use of international human rights mechanisms to seek accountability and justice.

III. Implementation Assessment

A. Respect for the Rights of Women and Girls

8. Out of the 592 recommendations offered to Yemen during the past three UPR cycles, 138 recommendations relate to women's rights to live free from violence and discrimination and contribute as full members of Yemeni society. Yemen received 44 related recommendations in 2019; accepting all but two. At the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 in 2019, the government reaffirmed its commitment to ending all types of violence against women and girls and early and forced marriages by 2030.ⁱⁱⁱ Forty-four recommendations urged Yemen to (a) abolish male guardianship, (b) eliminate forced marriage, (c) increase the minimum age for marriage, (d) promote and protect women's right to participation of women in public life, (e) protect women and girls from violence and sexual exploitation, (f) ensure equal access to education, and (g) enhance the participation of women in both the peace process. Yemen accepted all but two of these recommendations in 2019, but conditions for establishing basic protections for the rights of women and girls in Yemen continue to deteriorate, particularly in areas under Ansar Allah control.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/commitment/ending-gender-based-violence-and-other-harmful-practices-2>

i. Eliminate forced marriage and increase the minimum age for marriage

9. Of significant concern is that despite the Yemeni government accepting all 9 of the recommendations received in 2019 to introduce stipulations in the country’s legal framework that raise the legal minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years of age and recognize women’s right to refuse marriage, there remains a glaring absence of any concrete law, policy, or plan to achieve these crucial objectives effectively, and no central authority to enforce and protect the rights of women and girls currently exists.^{iv} A 2013 survey conducted in Yemen showed that 15.5% of married women were married before the age of 15 and 43.6% were married before the age of 18.^v According to a 2019 report by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), more than 4 million Yemeni girls are forced into child marriages, with 1.4 million of them being younger than 15 years old. Members of the Sharia Legislative Committee have stated that having a minimum age for marriage is “un-Islamic” and a “threat to the culture and society of Yemen.”^{vi}

10. In their 2019 UPR submission, the Yemeni government emphasized their commitment to previously accepted recommendations regarding forced and early marriage. The report pointed to the 2014 declaration of a minimum age of 18 for marriage by the National Dialogue Conference. Following the Conference, a bill proposing to amend the Personal Status Act, which governs marriage and divorce, dictates women’s martial “duties,” and restricts their freedom of movement, was introduced to the House of Representatives in 2014.^{vii} However, the bill was never adopted and, as written, the Personal Status Act does not establish a minimum age for marriage.

ii. Protect women and girls from violence and sexual exploitation

11. Violence against women activists and human rights defenders is prevalent across Yemen. In February 2023, Hadramawt authorities arrested and detained seventeen human rights activists during a peaceful vigil. Women activists also increasingly experience^{viii} intense online harassment and are increasingly subject to bullying, attempted blackmail, and intimidation, encouraged by aggressive rhetoric by both civilians on social media and government officials aimed at fostering social hostility and inciting violence against women.^{ix} These trends undermine conditions for fulfilling commitments to 2019 cycle recommendations encouraging the Yemeni government to protect women’s participation in public and political life, and there are no cybercrime laws in Yemen that recognize or attempt to address cyber extortion.^x

^{iv} Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children, *Suffering Under Violence*, pg. 24; <https://justice4yemenpact.org/articles/suffering-under-violence/> (accessed 5 October 2023).

^v *Id.* at 24.

^{vi} <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ee1e7692.pdf>

^{vii} <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/640151468334820965/pdf/878200REVISED00Box0385200B00PUBLIC0.pdf>

^{viii} chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnibpcajpcgclcfndmkaj/https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/D3_EVAW%20report2572022.pdf

^{ix} <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/the-cybercrime-epidemic-targeting-yemeni-women/>

^x <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/yemen-women-and-female-activists-targeted-through-cybercrimes-and-online-blackmail-campaigns/>

iii. Promote and protect women's right to participation of women in public and political life, including in processes for ending Yemen's civil war

12. Although women in Yemen have had opportunities to participate in political affairs and processes, they have yet to hold senior leadership positions in either the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) or the Vertical Leadership Council (VGC), which were both formed in April 2022 and are headed by Chairman Rashad Al-Alimi. Women in Yemen also continue to endure high levels of violence, often resulting in extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, torture, and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. Justice 4 Yemen Pact, for example, has documented more than 5,000 incidents of violence against women between 2014 and the end of 2022, including such acts as killings, physical attacks, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, and torture, with violent acts against women and girls increasing since 2020.^{xi}

13. Conditions for enjoying fundamental civil, political, economic, and social rights have also worsened since 2020, especially under Ansar Allah-controlled areas, where women face increasingly strict controls on their freedom of movement, dress code, education, and economic opportunities. Ansar Allah authorities have announced a series of decisions and policies since mid-2020 that have enforced gender segregation in education and professions, forbidden women from traveling without a male guardian, imposed a strict dress code outside the home, and suspended reproductive health services, including family planning counseling.^{xii}

B. Respect for the Rights of Children (SAM, YCMHRV, CSWC)

14. Protections for children's rights have become an increasingly prominent feature in Yemen's UPR. The issue accounted for 12.4% of the recommendations in the first cycle, which rose to 26.7% in the second cycle and 25.89% in the third. Among myriad children's rights issues of grave concern has been the recruitment and exploitation of children in Yemen's armed conflict, which has garnered significant international attention since 2014, constituting 16% of recommendations raised since Yemen's second UPR. Other recommendations since 2014 have prioritize preventing the killing and maiming of children, protecting them from sexual violence and kidnapping, and ensuring their access to life-saving humanitarian aid. This growing emphasis reflects attention to the disturbing trend of violence and grave violations against children (0-18 years), which constitute close to over 50% of Yemen's population.

15. Since 2014, Yemen has embraced nearly 92% of the recommendations pertaining to children's rights. Notably, the UN's constructive collaboration with the Ansar Allah leadership in the intervening years since its last UPR resulted in the signing of an Action Plan in 2022 to eradicate child recruitment for armed conflict. This development potentially paved the way for implementing several of these recommendations.

^{xi} <https://samrl.org/?l=e/10/A/c/1/70/72/4150/On-their-world-day...-Sam-reveals-figures-showing-violations-against-women-in-Yemen-during-the-war>

^{xii} <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/06/Houthis-violating-womens-and-girls-rights-yemen>

16. Rights monitors and advocates have reported a significant 40% decrease in violations against children since the 2022 ceasefire^{xiii}, including their recruitment and exploitation in armed conflict, acts of violence resulting in death or injury, sexual violence, obstruction of aid access, and attacks on schools and hospitals. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the numbers of these grave violations still remain alarmingly high. In 2022 alone, the United Nations verified an astonishing 1,596 instances of such violations.^{xiv}

17. For example, despite pledging to refrain from recruiting children as soldiers, the practice has increased among IRG armed forces and armed groups. The GEE's 2020 report reveals extensive child recruitment by the Special Security Forces and other entities associated with the Yemeni government and Arab coalition. These children were often transported to Saudi camps for training^{xv} and primarily utilized to defend the Saudi border against Ansar Allah ground attacks.^{xvi} Ansar Allah-groups' recruitment efforts have only increased, culminating in a widely publicized Summer 2023 campaign to use community-level coercion, controlled schools, and youth summer camps to recruit over 2 million children. The success of their campaign remains uncertain.^{xvii} The J4YP coalition has also documented incidents of child recruitment in areas outside Ansar Allah's control. Since 2020, the J4YP coalition has also documented incidents of child recruitment in areas outside Ansar Allah's control. Exploiting the collapsed economy, dire humanitarian conditions, and limited educational and professional opportunities, all parties exert pressure on families and entice children into service and martyrdom.

18. Furthermore, acts of violence, including assault, kidnapping, denial of humanitarian aid sexual and lethal violence, have also been addressed in previous UPR cycles. However, these violations and dire humanitarian circumstances persist. The fragmented government authority in Yemen has impeded efforts to rebuild the social safety net necessary for guaranteeing children's fundamental rights and inadequate political will and action challenge attempts to address these conditions, including steps recognized in the recently adopted 2022 Action Plan to Strengthen the Protection of Children Affected by Armed Conflict.^{xviii}

19. According to the UN, over 10,200 children have been killed or maimed since the conflict began. Since 2019, the J4YP coalition has documented numerous incidents of children being killed by snipers, indiscriminate fire, and aerial bombardment from all sides involved in the conflict. Furthermore, since the 2022 ceasefire, there has been a rise in children being killed and injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Reports indicate that child casualties from landmines have increased eightfold from 2018 to 2022, with an average of one child killed or injured every three days in Yemen over the past five years.^{xix} From 2014 to 2022, the Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations, a partner of the J4YP coalition, has documented over 1,929

^{xiii} A/77/895-S/2023/363 Children and Armed Conflict, Report of the Secretary General, para. 6, 5 June 2023

^{xiv} *Id.*, para. 206

^{xv} Third report of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen, September 2020. <https://bit.ly/3PbnnFj>.

^{xvi} *Id.*

^{xvii} *Id.*, para. 206

^{xviii} <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2022/04/new-action-plan-to-strengthen-the-protection-of-children-affected-by-armed-conflict-in-yemen-signed-with-the-Houthis/>

^{xix} <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/children-yemen-face-highest-risk-landmines-and-explosive-devices-least-five-years-save-children>

civilian deaths and the destruction or damage of over 2,872 public and private facilities due to anti-personnel or anti-vehicle mines.^{xx}

20. Ansar Allah-groups have also extensively used landmines in Taiz and Marib, two highly contested areas, often laying extensive minefields around civilian structures such as hospitals and schools. Due to children's inherent innocence and curiosity and their tendency to wander away from designated paths while playing outdoors, they face an increased risk of harm from landmine fields once active conflict ceases. Previous UPR recommendations do not explicitly address the cessation of use and clearance of landmines and UXO, but several recommendations generally call for the government to respect and obey international humanitarian law. Using indiscriminate weapons such as landmines is banned internationally, and Yemen is a state party to the Mine Ban Treaty.^{xxi}

22. Moreover, Yemen's legal framework remains inadequate in safeguarding children's rights. For instance, the law does not distinguish between criminal, juvenile cases where children were coerced into criminal activities and those cases where they willfully participated, which fails to consider underlying factors such as manipulation, exploitation, and vulnerability that led to their participation. This punitive approach fails to address the root causes of their involvement or ensure appropriate punishments for juveniles and leads to a lack of accountability for those who exploit and manipulate children into committing crimes — perpetuating a cycle of victimization for the child. Furthermore, access to due process rights and adequate legal representation for children accused of criminal offenses is severely limited, with many children and their families facing barriers such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of access to information or witnesses being used to support allegations against them.

C. Rights of Internally Displaced Persons

23. The Governorate of Marib in Yemen is home to the most significant number of internally displaced people (IDPs), which has been steadily increasing since 2019 due to ongoing conflicts in certain parts of the area. Despite the ceasefire implemented in 2022, the IDP population in Marib remains high. From 2019 to 2022, the J4YP coalition documented numerous violations against IDPs by all sides involved in the conflict. These violations include 31 incidents of military targeting, destruction, and looting of private property, extensive use of landmines and cluster munitions in frontline areas such as Al Hudaydah and Al Jawf, child recruitment, 14 cases of arbitrary arrests, 6 cases of enforced disappearance, and 5 incidences of extrajudicial execution.^{xxii} The increased instability faced by IDPs makes them more vulnerable to violations and hinders their access to justice. While general recommendations have been made during each UPR cycle, progress in protecting the rights of IDPs has been limited. However, in 2021, two additional roads were opened to facilitate increased access to humanitarian aid.^{xxiii}

^{xx} <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/87802>

^{xxi} https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=XXVI-5&chapter=26&clang=en

^{xxii} <https://justice4yemenpact.org/articles/internally-displaced-persons-and-the-scourge-of-the-conflict/>

^{xxiii} *Id.*

D. Arbitrary Detention, Enforced Disappearance, and Torture

24. Despite Yemen's acceptance of numerous recommendations that call for ending the use of enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture, these practices endure. J4YP coalition partners, for example, have extensively documented hundreds of incidents of these violations since 2019. Both SAM Organization for Rights and Freedoms^{xxiv} and Abductees Mothers' Association (AMA)^{xxv} have reported on the continued, widespread practice of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and torture under the control of all parties to the conflict, including informal armed groups affiliated with the Internationally Recognized Government. These groups operate without proper judicial oversight, maintain illegal prisons, and commit widespread and brutal violations, often driven by personal or hyper-local power dynamics and agendas. Between 2019 and 2022, AMA alone monitored and documented 2,725 cases of arbitrary detention of civilians, 761 cases of enforced disappearance, and 974 cases of torture and ill-treatment of civilian detainees. Additionally, AMA has investigated and documented 153 detainee death cases in Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, Dhamar, and Ma'rib.^{xxvi} The causes of these deaths varied, including aerial bombardment of detention facilities, gunshot wounds, torture, and medical negligence.^{xxvii}

25. Systematic and widespread human rights violations also continue to occur in areas under Ansar Allah control, where undocumented prisons and detention centers operate. Ansar Allah authorities employ a broad approach, arresting and disappearing individuals who they perceive as opposing their religious beliefs or authority. Tragically, thousands of Yemeni citizens have vanished within this opaque and oppressive system. These secret prisons are rife with extended solitary confinement, physical and psychological torture, mistreatment, limited access to basic facilities, deprivation of light and sleep, forced nudity, and death threats. Such inhumane practices are distressingly frequent and indiscriminate.^{xxviii} All parties involved in the conflict have resisted acknowledging the problem, and there have been no genuine efforts to prevent these violations, investigate reports, or hold the perpetrators accountable.

26. Despite the positive development of the April 2023 prisoner swap, which involved nearly 900 detainees, it is disheartening to note that as recently as May 2023, 18 members of the Baha'i religious minority were arbitrarily arrested and continue to be detained by Ansar Allah authorities.^{xxix} However, the ongoing peace process instills hope for the possibility of additional releases in the future of those unfairly detained, but the practice of enforced disappearance has continued apace.

^{xxiv} <https://samrl.org/?l=e/10/A/c/1/70/72/4292/A-Human-Rights-Report-Published-by-SAM-on-the-Atrocities-of-Enforced-Disappearance-in-Yemen>

^{xxv} <https://justice4yemenpact.org/articles/justice-for-abductees/>

^{xxvi} *Id.*

^{xxvii} *Id.*

^{xxviii} <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/i-had-death-wish-suffering-endured-prisoners-set-free-Houthi-prisons-yemen-enar>

^{xxix} <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/30/yemen-Houthis-forcibly-disappear-bahais>

E. Civil and Political Rights

i. Right to a Fair Trial

27. Several recommendations have been made to Yemen since 2009 to build the capacity of judges and judicial staff, ensure fair trial standards, and promote the judicial system's independence. Regrettably, Ansar Allah's seizure of significant Yemeni territory in 2014 has fragmented state institutions and disrupted efforts to strengthen fair trial standards and protections for due process rights in the country. Further to this, the absence of a fair trial right in Yemen undermines the government's efforts to establish the rule of law and hinders Yemeni citizens from effectively seeking justice, while deficiencies in due process rights protections exacerbate other violations, including enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest, and the persecution of journalists and human rights defenders. These systemic flaws have far-reaching implications for justice and rule of law and human rights, eroding trust in the judicial system and perpetuating impunity.

28. Since 2019, for example, the J4YP coalition partners have documented numerous cases in which individuals were sentenced to death following unjust trials. These trials consistently lacked due process rights, adequate legal representation, and access to the evidence presented against the accused. Furthermore, even when defendants were granted legal representation or the opportunity to assert legal defenses, their advocates were frequently impeded from examining evidence or presenting witnesses in their defense.^{xxx} It is also crucial to consider violations of the equality of arms in these proceedings. This principle emphasizes the importance of balancing the resources and power between the prosecution and the defense and ensuring that both sides in a legal dispute have equal opportunities to present their arguments, witnesses, and other evidence. However, there was a noticeable disparity in these cases, with defendants often facing significant obstacles in gathering evidence, presenting their case, and receiving a fair trial. Its absence in these trials further highlights the systemic flaws and injustices that have plagued the legal processes surrounding capital offenses. It is imperative that these issues are addressed and rectified to ensure that justice is served and the principle of equality of arms is upheld in all legal proceedings.

29. Ansar Allah groups have also established specialized courts, functioning as an extension of their leadership, which enables them to execute their political adversaries and confiscate their assets. This judicial entity, known as "The Judicial Guardian,"^{xxxi} serves as a means for them to carry out these actions. The court has been accused of targeting journalists, human rights activists, and political opponents, exposing their blatant disregard for human rights and the rule of law.

F. Freedom of Expression

30. Over the course of the last three UPR cycles, Yemen has received a total of 24 recommendations regarding press freedom and freedom of expression. Out of these 24 recommendations, only one has been rejected, specifically concerning the freedom of movement for national and international human rights observers and journalists. It is worth highlighting that most of the recommendations provided have been of a general nature, needing more specific

^{xxx} <https://samrl.org/l/?l=e/10/A/c/1/70/72/4739/No-Justice>

^{xxxi} <https://samrl.org/l.html?l=a/10/A/c/1/70/72/4375>

actionable steps for the Yemeni government to undertake. One of the only concrete suggestions came from 5 recommendations encouraging the Yemeni government to amend the Press and Publications Act and subsequently enforce the Act in accordance with international standards.

31. Freedom of expression continues to be restricted, with widespread violations still prevalent, including against journalists and rights advocates. Although the Yemeni Constitution ensures the right to freedom of thought and expression, the lack of an independent and effective judiciary to uphold these protections undermines the effectiveness of these protections. The Press and Publications Act also imposes legal boundaries on these constitutional guarantees, which a compromised judiciary can exploit to impose excessive restrictions through repressive practices. Regrettably, since the last UPR cycle, no efforts have been made to address shortcomings in the Press and Publications Act. As recently as September 29, 2023 Amnesty International reported that the Ansar Allah authorities arbitrarily arrested hundreds of peaceful protesters commemorating the country's 26th anniversary of the September Revolution.

32. Justice 4 Yemen Pact coalition partners, including SAM, Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism^{xxxii}, and the Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC)^{xxxiii} have documented hundreds of cases of violations against journalists. These violations range from harassment, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, deprivation of due process, and torture, to even killings. Alarming, these acts are often carried out under the pretext of state security and combating terrorism. Journalistic offices have been looted, media channels and radio stations shuttered, and news websites blocked. This relentless targeting not only violates the fundamental rights of journalists but also instills fear and intimidation throughout society.^{xxxiv} As a result, many journalists and media professionals have been forced to seek asylum in foreign lands after enduring targeted harassment in Yemen.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

33. The situation of human rights in Yemen will be reviewed for the fourth time within the framework of the UPR. This submission is meant to take stock of all steps made in the last five years towards progress, define the hindering effects of the continuing conflict on the Government's ability to uphold its UPR commitments.

The Justice 4 Yemen Pact coalition calls on all recommending states to:

- Remind the Internationally Recognized Government of Yemen of its previous commitments.
- Call on the Yemeni government to implement recommendations from previous cycles that still need to be implemented.
- Call on Ansar Allah authorities to implement previously agreed-to commitments to human rights and child protection.

^{xxxii} <https://justice4yemenpact.org/articles/liquidation-of-witnesses/>

^{xxxiii} <https://economicmedia.net/en/?p=3101#more>

^{xxxiv} <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/08/yemen-government-must-stop-prosecution-and-harassment-of-journalists/>

To follow up this report with specific, realistic, and action-oriented recommendations, including establishing a special investigative mechanism to conduct continued investigation and reporting into human rights violations by all parties.

Recommending states should call on the Yemeni government to take aggressive action to make progress toward greater protection of rights, including the following:

A. Women's Rights

- Implement policies and quotas to increase women's representation in political and decision-making roles, including government, parliament, and local councils;
- Strengthen measures to prevent and address gender-based violence, including domestic violence, by implementing and enforcing laws, providing support services for survivors, and conducting awareness campaigns;
- Pass legislation establishing a minimum age for marriage at 18 years old and protecting the right of women to refuse marriage and get divorced;
- Ensure full access to justice for women, including by ensuring that victims of sexual violence receive protection and support to access justice, and ending impunity for military and militias and law enforcement including for SGBV;
- Adopt a comprehensive national strategy and a draft law to combat all forms of violence against women, including women's rights defenders, at the public and domestic levels;
- Ensure that humanitarian support reaches the populations in need, especially women and children.
- Engage in diplomatic efforts to promote human rights in Yemen and advocate for accountability for human rights violations.

B. Grave Violations of Children's Rights

- Ensure that all armed groups immediately cease recruiting child soldiers, release from duty all children who are under 18, and ensure they have access to rehabilitation programs;
- Fully implement the Government of Yemen's 2014 action plan to end and prevent recruitment and use and the 2018 roadmap, the Coalition's 2019 memorandum of understanding and related program of activities, and Ansar Allah's 2022 action plan;
- The Security Belt Forces must continue to participate in activities under the Government's 2018 roadmap;
- Harmonize national laws with international conventions, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols;
- Facilitate immediate, safe, and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid to children and other civilians in need;
- Identify and remove landmines and unexploded remnants of war;
- Avoid using educational facilities as military barracks or weapons depots and ensure these spaces are dedicated to education;
- Hold perpetrators accountable for all violations and abuses against children, including through timely, independent, and systematic investigations, prosecution, and, as appropriate, prosecution and conviction.

C. Arbitrarily Detention, Enforced Disappearance, and Torture

- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Immediately halt the practice of arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearance, and torture, and other ill-treatment -- and immediately release all persons arbitrarily held, including for the exercise of their fundamental rights;
- Publish official lists of all individuals currently in detention centers and those who have died in detention, and provide immediate and unhindered access to independent humanitarian agencies to all detention facilities, official and unofficial, without prior notification;
- Investigate all reported incidents of torture in accordance with international standards; take immediate measures to hold those responsible accountable and provide remedies to victims;
- Conduct prompt, thorough, and impartial investigations into allegations of arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and deaths in custody, bring the perpetrators to justice, and suspend members of the security forces against whom there are credible allegations of human rights abuses, pending investigations;
- Immediately allow international monitoring teams from the ICRC to conduct inspections of all prisons and detention centers in line with international standards to assess conditions and practices.

D. Fair Trials and Access to Justice

- Ensure the principles of fair trial for all detainees;
- Guarantee judicial independence and insulation of the judiciary from political influence;
- Abolish all death sentences in cases based on political backdrops and/or related to the conflict in Yemen;
- Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) without reservations or delay.

E. Freedom of Expression

- Cease any actions that restrict journalists and refrain from issuing decisions or procedures that hinder their ability to carry out their journalistic duties;
- Immediately release journalists who have been arbitrarily detained, have served their sentences, or have faced violations of due process;
- Adjudicate cases of detained journalists in the Press and Publications Court in accordance international standards and do not prosecute journalists in specialized state security proceedings;
- Ensure all journalists and media organizations can operate freely and independently.
- Conduct effective, immediate, comprehensive, impartial, independent, transparent and genuine investigations into all cases of killing and assassinations against journalists and refer those involved in these violations to a fair trial.