

Bloody Gambles

Human Rights Situation in Yemen 2024

Bloody Gambles

Human Rights Situation in Yemen 2024

Table of Contents

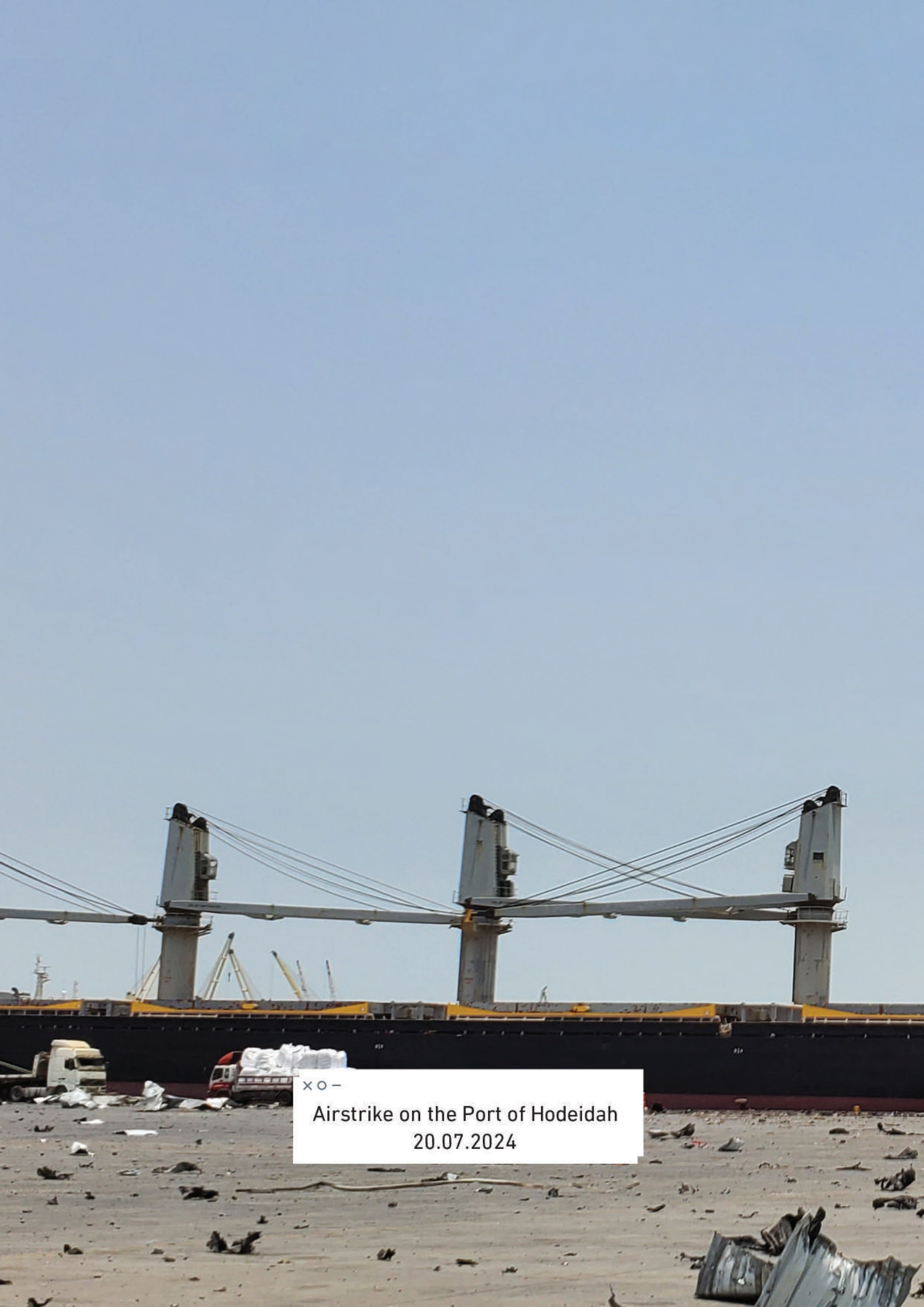
List Of Abbreviations	08
Executive Summary	11
Introduction	15
Methodology	17
Chapter One	19
General Background	19
Second: Map Of Control in 2024	24
Third: Ongoing Violations in 2024	28
Fourth: The Humanitarian Situatuion in Yemen in 2024	31
Fifth: International Humanitarian Law and The Armed Conflict in Yemen	35
Chapter Two: Key Patterns of Violations in 2024	37
First: Airstrikes by the US-UK Coalition ("Operation Prosperity Guardian")	39
Examples of Airstrikes by the US-UK Coalition	41
Second: Israeli Airstrikes	43
Examples of Israeli Airstrikes	44
Third: Drone Attacks	47
Examples of Drone Attacks	47
Fourth: The Legal Framework Governing Aerial Attacks, Including Airstrikes and Drone Strikes	49
Examples of Ground Attacks	51
Sixth: The Legal Framework on Ground Attacks	55
Examples of Landmine and Explosive Remnant Incidents	58
Eighth: The Legal Framework on Landmines and Explosive Remnants	68
Ninth: Live Ammunition	68
Examples of Live Ammunition Incidents	70
Tenth: The Legal Framework on the Use of Live Ammunition	75
Eleventh: Vehicular Assaults by Military Vehicles	77
Examples of Vehicular Assaults by Military Vehicles	78

Twelfth: Legal Framework Governing Incidents of Vehicular Assault by Military Vehicles	83
Thirteenth: Enforced Disappearance	83
Examples of Enforced Disappearance Incidents	85
Fourteenth: The Legal Framework Governing Enforced Disappearance	91
Fifteenth: Arbitrary Detention	92
Examples of Arbitrary Detention Incidents	93
Sixteenth: The Legal Framework on Arbitrary Detention	99
Seventeenth: Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment	101
Examples of Torture Incidents	101
Eighteenth: The Legal Framework on Torture	106
Nineteenth: Extrajudicial Killings	107
Examples of Extrajudicial Killings	108
Twentieth: The Legal Framework on Extrajudicial Killings	109
Twenty-First: Child Recruitment and Use	110
Examples of Child Recruitment and Use	111
Twenty-Second: Legal Framework on Child Recruitment and Use	114
Twenty-Third: Sexual Violence	116
Twenty-Fourth: The Legal Framework on Sexual Violence	123
Twenty-Fifth: Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities	124
Examples of Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities	125
Twenty-Sixth: The Legal Framework on Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities	132
Twenty-Seventh: Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions	133
Examples of Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions	134
Twenty-Eighth: The Legal Framework Governing Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions	138
Twenty-Ninth: Denial of Humanitarian Access	139
Examples of Denial of Humanitarian Access Incidents	140

Thirtieth: The Legal Framework on the Denial of Humanitarian Access	145
Thirty-First: Violations of Civic Space and Public Freedoms	146
Examples of Violations of Civic Space and Public Freedoms by Parties to the Conflict	149
2- Examples of Violations Committed by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) Group	153
Thirty-Second: Forced Displacement	156
Examples of Forced Displacement	157
Thirty-Third: Legal Framework on Forced Displacement	157
Thirty-Fourth: Terrorist Bombings	158
Example of Terrorist Bombings	159
Chapter Three: Recommendations	160
To All Parties to the Conflict	161
To the Ansar Allah (Houthi) Group	162
To the Internationally Recognized Government	163
To the Southern Transitional Council (STC)	164
To the Saudi/UAE-led Coalition	165
To the Joint Forces	166
To United Nations Member States	167
To the United Nations Human Rights Council	167
To the United Nations Security Council	168
To Civil Society Organizations	168

List of Abbreviations

Houthi.	Ansar Allah Group
IRG.	The Internationally Recognized Government of Yemen
UAE.	The United Arab Emirates
GCC.	The Gulf Cooperation Council
GPC.	The General People's Congress
NDC.	National Dialogue Conference
IDPS.	Internally Displaced Persons
STC.	The Southern Transitional Council
IDF.	The Israeli Defense Forces
IHL.	International Humanitarian Law
IHRL.	International Human Rights Law
ERW.	Explosive Remnants of War
IEDs.	Improvised Explosive Devices
DRC.	The Danish Refugee Council
CCW.	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
OHCHR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
CID.	Criminal Investigation Department
CRC.	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ICC.	International Criminal Court



× ○ —

Airstrike on the Port of Hodeidah
20.07.2024

Executive Summary



The conflict in Yemen enters its eleventh year amid the continued perpetration of horrific violations by various parties to the conflict, in a context marked by the collapse of state institutions, which have crumbled in favor of armed groups backed by rival regional powers. This situation—worsened by rapid regional and international developments—has deepened the suffering of Yemenis and continued to deprive them of their fundamental rights to life, dignity, and freedom, further entrenching the isolation imposed upon them.

This eighth annual report by Mwatana for Human Rights seeks to shed light on the state of human rights in Yemen during 2024. It provides an overview of the most prominent incidents and patterns of violations committed by different parties to the conflict, including the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group; forces of the internationally recognized Yemeni government, including those affiliated with the Islah Party; the Southern Transitional Council (STC) in its various formations; the Saudi/UAE-led coalition; and the Joint Forces. The report also highlights violations committed by other regional and international actors, including the US-UK coalition and Israeli forces—both of which emerged as new parties to the conflict during 2024.

Through this report, Mwatana for Human Rights aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the scale and types of violations endured by Yemenis in 2024, based on the organization's documentation. The report seeks to amplify the voices of victims, expose the magnitude of the ongoing tragedy, and urge the international community and human rights organizations to act to end the humanitarian catastrophe that Yemenis have faced for over a decade.

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 1,499 incidents of violations committed by various parties to the conflict in Yemen. These serious violations posed a direct threat to the lives and safety of civilians. They resulted in the deaths of at least 181 civilians, including at least 45 children and 2 women, while at least 471 civilians were injured, among them at least 220 children and 32 women. In addition, at least 1,248 civilians—including at least 246 children and 39 women—were victims of other patterns of violations, most notably enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture, the recruitment and use of children, sexual violence, and attacks on press freedom, public liberties, and civic space, among others.

According to the report's findings, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group topped the list of perpetrators in 2024, bearing responsibility for 867 documented violations.

The Southern Transitional Council (STC) was responsible for 265 violations, while the internationally recognized Yemeni government was responsible for 264. The Joint Forces on the western coast were responsible for 32 violations, and the Saudi/UAE-led coalition for 31. Additionally, Israeli forces were responsible for 8 violations, as were Eritrean forces, and the US-UK “Prosperity Guardian” coalition for 7 violations. Terrorist organizations were responsible for 3 violations, while non-state actors—primarily human smuggling and trafficking gangs—were responsible for 14 documented incidents.

The report's findings are based on investigative interviews conducted by Mwatana's field team of researchers and lawyers—both women and men—across various governorates throughout 2024. The team carried out at least 2,271 interviews with primary sources regarding at least 1,499 incidents. The findings are also supported by field visits conducted by both central and field teams, hundreds of supporting documents, regular updates on the situation in Yemen compiled by Mwatana's field researchers throughout the year, and statistical reports and bulletins issued by international organizations and agencies concerned with Yemen.

Despite the decrease in large-scale military operations during the year, the persistence of these violations demonstrates a lack of serious effort by parties to the conflict to protect civilians or mitigate the harm inflicted upon them. This negligence reflects a flagrant disregard for the fundamental rules and principles of international humanitarian law, which strictly prohibit all forms of violence against life and physical integrity—including killing, maiming, and physical and psychological assault.

In addition to the introduction and methodology, the report provides a general background on the armed conflict in Yemen, its origins and evolution, the territorial control map of conflict parties, the humanitarian and human rights situation, and the legal framework governing the nature of the armed conflict in Yemen and the applicable legal rules. The report also highlights key patterns of human rights violations against civilians in 2024, including aerial bombardment (airstrikes and drone attacks), ground shelling, live ammunition, landmines and explosive remnants of war, vehicular assaults by military vehicles, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, extrajudicial killings, child recruitment and use, sexual violence, attacks on vital civilian infrastructure protected under international humanitarian law, restrictions and obstruction of humanitarian aid, and violations of civic space and public freedoms.

Violations Witnessed in Yemen During the Year 2024

— ○ ×

1499
Violations

181
Killed



45 Children **2** Woman

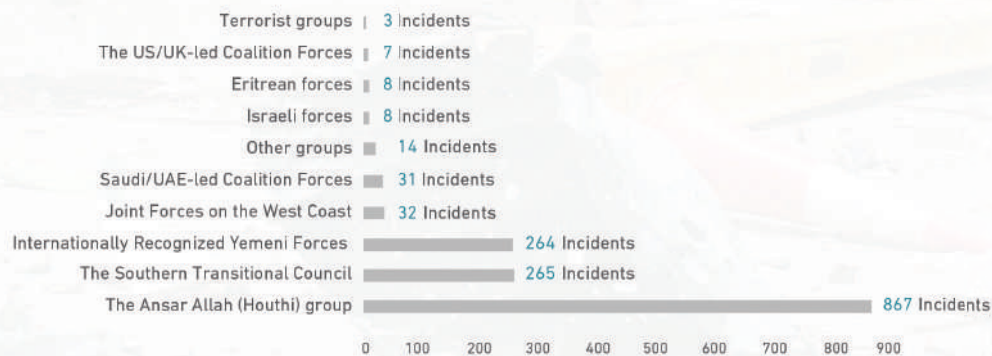
471
Injured



220 Children **32** Woman

1248 Civilians
246 Children **39** Woman

fell victims to other
types of violations





Introduction

In its eighth annual report, “Bloody Gambles,” Mwatana for Human Rights reviews the state of human rights in Yemen throughout 2024, revealing the continued perpetration of violations against civilians by the warring parties and de facto authorities dividing control over different parts of Yemen, which remains trapped at the brink of armed conflict. This ongoing violence persists despite a decrease in primary military operations and a relative calm along internal frontlines. Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis has worsened for millions of people suffering from food insecurity, lack of healthcare, collapse of basic services, and increasing rates of displacement.

The year 2024 saw the addition of U.S., British, and Israeli forces to the list of parties committing violations in Yemen. On the evening of Thursday, January 11, 2024, U.S. and British forces launched a military campaign known as Operation Prosperity Guardian, carrying out hundreds of airstrikes over the following months. These strikes targeted locations in Sana’a, Al Hudaydah, Al Bayda, and Taiz—areas under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. On the evening of Saturday, July 20, 2024, Israeli warplanes carried out their first attacks in Yemen, striking the ports of Al Hudaydah and As-Salif, as well as the power station in Al Hudaydah city (northwestern Yemen), in an attempt to halt attacks by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group against Israeli vessels. These Houthi attacks began on November 19, 2023, targeting Israeli vessels and ships bound to or from Israel in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait. The attacks were launched in response to the escalating humanitarian catastrophe affecting hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, and in reaction to the genocide and other war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during Israel’s devastating military operation in Gaza, following the October 7, 2023 attack by Palestinian factions on Israeli settlements in the Gaza envelope.

This report presents incidents, patterns, and statistics representing only what Mwatana for Human Rights was able to access and document during 2024. It does not provide an exhaustive account of all violations that occurred, meaning the actual scale of abuses is likely much greater than what is reflected in this report. What this report documents underscores that the continuation of violations by all parties, now into the eleventh year of conflict, is the result of the international community’s abandonment of its responsibility to hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable—perpetuating a culture of impunity.



Methodology

This report is based on field data and investigative reports compiled by Mwatana for Human Rights' team of researchers and lawyers—both women and men—across 21 Yemeni governorates between January and December 2024. During this period, the team conducted no fewer than 2,771 interviews with survivors, relatives and friends of victims, eyewitnesses, and individuals working in the medical and humanitarian sectors. The interviews were conducted in Arabic. For documentation involving non-Arabic-speaking African migrants during their transit through Yemen, interpreters were used.

Throughout 2024, Mwatana's field team—which included 59 researcher and 22 lawyers—conducted at least 3,848 field visits across 21 governorates. Of these, 967 visits were carried out by researchers for the purposes of monitoring and documenting violations, while 2,881 visits were conducted by lawyers from the Legal Support Unit for documentation and legal follow-up. In addition, Mwatana's central team conducted field visits to the governorates of Aden, Shabwah, Hadhramaut, Al Hudaydah, and Ibb. The documented incidents underwent multiple levels of review and verification by central researchers and lawyers, as well as by research, legal support, and other relevant units and departments.

As part of its field investigations, Mwatana's research methodology is based on independently and safely collecting testimonies and information from primary and credible sources. Researchers and lawyers on the field team obtained informed consent from victims and various types of witnesses during documentation and interviews. The team also collected available physical evidence, including photographs, documents, official records, medical reports, and images of weapon and ammunition remnants, among other forms of evidence. Mwatana adheres strictly to a policy of not offering any financial or in-kind compensation, or any form of promise, to victims, witnesses, or others who are interviewed.

In some instances, Mwatana engaged specialized international experts to analyze images and videos captured by the team, to identify the types of weapons used and other relevant technical details.

While documenting violations throughout 2024, Mwatana's field team faced numerous challenges, risks, and obstacles. Several team members were subjected to violations, including arbitrary detention, threats, restrictions on movement, and denial of freedom of movement. Additional difficulties included navigating remote areas, facing various security risks, and dealing with a lack of basic services, among other hardships.

01

CHAPTER ONE

General Background

First: The Armed Conflict in Yemen

In 2011, amid the wave of Arab Spring uprisings that swept across Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, and Libya, various regions of Yemen witnessed a surge of demonstrations and popular protests. These movements called for political and economic reforms, the strengthening of fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and civil liberties, as well as demands for social justice and equality. Later that same year, the protests escalated to calls for the removal of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime. In response, Saleh's government resorted to various forms of repression against demonstrators. During this period, several armed clashes broke out between regime forces and armed factions supporting the revolution, including military formations that had defected from the army—most notably the First Armored Division—as well as tribal militias.

As violence escalated, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) intervened as a mediator in an attempt to reach a political solution to Yemen's crisis. This effort resulted in the Gulf Initiative and its accompanying implementation mechanism⁽¹⁾—a supra-constitutional framework outlining a peaceful transfer of power. In its first phase, the initiative called for the formation of a national unity government, stipulating that President Saleh would step down in exchange for immunity from prosecution for himself and those who had worked with him during his three-decade-long rule.

Under the terms of the initiative, President Ali Abdullah Saleh was to transfer all executive powers to his then-vice president, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Presidential elections followed, with Hadi running as the sole candidate. A national unity government was subsequently formed, consisting of members of the General People's Congress (GPC), the party led by Saleh, and opposition groups, most notably the Joint Meeting Parties. A National Dialogue Conference (NDC) was convened, bringing together a broad spectrum of political and societal actors in Yemen⁽²⁾, tasked with laying the foundations for a new constitutional framework and holding general elections. The NDC concluded its sessions in January 2014.

During 2013 and 2014, many areas in northern Yemen witnessed armed clashes between government forces and various armed groups, most prominently the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The Houthis seized control of the governorates of Saada and Amran by force and continued their advance until they captured the

1. The Gulf initiative, from the website of the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, is available at: <https://www.gcc-sg.org/ar/MediaCenter/News/Pages/New2277.aspx>.

2. The website of the National Dialogue Conference is available at <http://www.ndc.ye/>.

capital, Sana'a, on September 21, 2014, marking the beginning of the current phase of armed conflict in Yemen.

On March 26, 2015, the Saudi ambassador announced from Washington, D.C., the launch of a military campaign by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition, known as Operation Decisive Storm. The coalition, initially comprising ten countries and led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, declared its objective to be the end of the Houthi and Saleh-aligned rebellion and the restoration of the internationally recognized government of President Hadi. However, the intervention of the Saudi/UAE-led coalition further complicated the conflict and significantly worsened the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

In August 2015, southern forces—backed by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition—succeeded in regaining control of the city of Aden and five other Yemeni governorates. By late 2017, tensions had escalated between former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh—who retained significant power and influence even after stepping down—and the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. These tensions culminated in Saleh's death on December 4, 2017, and the collapse of the alliance between Saleh's forces and the Houthis. This alliance had been officially announced at the onset of the coalition's military campaign in Yemen in March 2015 and lasted until December 2017.

As a result of this breakdown, a new party to the conflict emerged: the Joint Forces, led by Tareq Saleh. These forces are based along the western coast in the city of Mocha and receive direct support from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In January 2018, the STC forces seized control of the city of Aden and various government headquarters, including the presidential palace, following a series of clashes. Coalition forces intervened to de-escalate the situation between the two sides, resulting in a temporary halt to hostilities. However, clashes resumed in 2019, and STC forces once again took control of the presidential palace (Al-Ma'ashiq) and key military camps in Aden.

On November 5, 2019, the "Riyadh Agreement" was signed between the internationally recognized Yemeni government and the STC, including its affiliated units such as the Security Belts and Elite Forces. Sponsored by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the signing ceremony was held in the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

The agreement aimed to resolve the conflict between the two sides and to regulate political, economic, military, and security arrangements in southern Yemen.

The agreement stipulated the formation of a politically competent government comprising 24 ministers, equally divided between northern and southern representatives, with participation from the STC. It also called for restructuring military and security forces by integrating STC-affiliated forces into the Ministries of Defense and Interior under the internationally recognized government, along with additional administrative and economic measures intended to enhance state institutions and improve living and service conditions in southern areas. However, implementation of the agreement's provisions has faced persistent delays and challenges. Since then, STC forces have effectively maintained control over most of the southern regions, exercising direct authority over government institutions and local communities.

On April 7, 2022, an announcement was made from Riyadh that then-President of the internationally recognized government, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, was transferring his powers and authority to a Presidential Leadership Council headed by Rashad Mohammed Al-Alimi and composed of seven other members representing various political and military factions influential within areas controlled by the internationally recognized government, the STC, and the Joint Forces.

Accordingly, the main parties to the armed conflict in Yemen can be identified as follows:

- The Saudi/UAE-led coalition forces.
- The internationally recognized government forces, which include various military factions, most notably the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah Party).
- The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, which controls the capital Sana'a and vast areas of northern Yemen.

Additionally, the Southern Transitional Council, with its various military formations, has emerged as a key actor in the conflict. The military landscape also includes the Joint Forces led by Tareq Saleh on the western coast.

On April 2, 2022, the United Nations announced a truce between the main parties to the conflict in Yemen, aimed at alleviating the humanitarian suffering of civilians by halting hostilities and opening certain humanitarian corridors, as well as facilitating the flow of essential humanitarian aid, including fuel, food, and medical supplies. The truce also included measures to ease restrictions on movement, particularly in areas under siege. This truce was extended once during 2022 and officially expired in November of the same year. Since then, the parties have observed an undeclared truce, marked by a continued relative decline in large-scale military operations; however, no final agreement has been reached to secure a permanent ceasefire that fulfills the aspirations of the Yemeni people for peace and stability.

Over the past years of armed conflict in Yemen, the country has witnessed clear divergence in the objectives of the warring parties—ranging from local agendas to regional and international interests backing different sides. The conflict has evolved into a struggle for control over strategic locations and natural resources, with each party focused on consolidating its influence by fragmenting the geographic landscape of the Republic of Yemen. In this context, the multiplicity of actors and the territorial fragmentation into disparate spheres of control have deepened the complexity of the political and military landscape, with devastating consequences for civilians, who have become the primary victims of this prolonged conflict.

In the absence of a unifying central authority, five major parties to the conflict now share control over Yemeni territory, with each acting as an independent entity that exercises state-like authority over its respective areas. These parties have enacted their own regulations, legislation, and restrictive measures imposed on populations under their control. Such practices have extended beyond the regulation of public life, assuming a repressive character aimed at consolidating power and imposing dominance. Civilians have been forced to live under multiple forms of restrictions that violate their fundamental rights, as the competition among the warring parties has come to be measured by their ability to impose such controls, vary their methods of domination and inflict harm upon the population.

Second: Map of Control in 2024⁽³⁾

Since the outbreak of armed conflict in Yemen in September 2014, the territorial control map among the warring parties has been defined by the geographic distribution of areas based on their strategic significance. As of 2024, the map of territorial control has not changed significantly from that of 2023. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group continues to maintain full control over seven governorates: Amanat Al-Asimah, Sana'a, Amran, Al Mahwit, Dhamar, Ibb, and Raymah. The group also maintains control over most of Sa'dah Governorate, which serves as its primary stronghold.

In 2018, internationally recognized government forces managed to regain control over several mountainous areas in border districts including Baqim, ,Kitaf wa Al Boq'a, and Razih. Currently, military confrontations have intensified in these areas. Government forces are concentrated near the center of Baqim District, placing them close to the main conflict zones. In Kitaf wa Al Boq'a, government forces have taken control of the Wadi Al-Far' subdistrict in the northern part of the district and advanced toward the Wadi Al Abu Jabara area, gaining control over a significant portion of that region.

In the desert areas of Kitaf District, the internationally recognized government forces have advanced from the Al-Atfin area toward Atis and Wadi Al-Aqiq.

In Al-Dhaher District, clashes have escalated markedly, with government forces now controlling most of the district and advancing westward toward Mount Marran, located in Haydan District.

Marib Governorate, which holds strategic importance in the ongoing conflict, serves as the northern stronghold of the internationally recognized government. It is also home to numerous members and supporters of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah Party) who have been displaced from various parts of the country. Marib is particularly significant as it connects northern and southern Yemen, providing access to Saudi territory.

3. Everything mentioned in the section on control and violations is taken from the monthly reports of field researchers.

The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group controls several districts in Marib, including Mahliyah, Rahbah, Al-Jubah, Al-Abdiyah, and Harib Al-Qaramish. They also control Medghal, Majzar, Jabal Murad, and Bidbadah districts, as well as large parts of Sirwah District. Sirwah functions as the administrative center from which the Houthis govern the areas they control in Marib Governorate.

In Al Hudaydah Governorate along the Red Sea coast, the Houthis control vast areas across multiple districts, including all of the governorate's seaports.

In densely populated Taiz Governorate, the Houthis control Al-Hawban, located east of the provincial capital, as well as the districts of Mawiyah, Shar'ab al-Salam, Shar'ab Ar Rawnah, and Khadir in their entirety. They also control large parts of Al-Ta'iziyah District, and parts of Hayfan, Same', Al-Silw, and Maqbanah Districts.

The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group also controls large portions of Al Bayda Governorate, including many districts and villages. These include Al-Bayda City, Rada'a, Sabah, Ar-Ryashyyah, Ash-Shariyah, Al-Malajim, Al-Quraishiyah, Wald Rabee', Al-Arsh, Raqamayn, Al-Sawadiyah, Al-Wahibiyah, and Dhi Na'im, in addition to Al-Taffah and Al-Bayda Rural Districts. They also control most villages in Na'ta', Na'man, and Al-Zahir Districts, many villages in As-Sawma'ah and Mukayras Districts, and a few villages in Maswarah District.

In Al-Jawf Governorate, the Houthi group controls most districts, including the eastern areas previously held by the internationally recognized government, such as Al-Hazm (the provincial capital), as well as the districts of Al-Ghayl, Al-Maslub, and Al-Khalq. After gaining control of Al-Yatmah, a border area adjacent to Saudi Arabia in the northeast of Khabb wa ash Sha'af District, the group also seized parts of the desert areas of the same district by mid-December 2021. However, areas like Al-Rayan, located in the eastern outskirts of the district, remain under the control of the internationally recognized government.

In Hajjah Governorate, which borders Saudi Arabia, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group controls the majority of the territory except for a few areas such as Midi, Hayran, parts of Abs District up to Bani Hassan, and the border regions in Haradh District, which remain under the control of the internationally recognized government and the Saudi/UAE-led coalition. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group retains control over 27 districts in the governorate, which are characterized by high population density.

In addition, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group controls parts of Al-Dhale' governorate, small areas on the outskirts of Lahj governorate, and the fringes of Bayhan and Ain districts in Shabwah governorate.

As for the internationally recognized government, it maintains complete control over Hadhramaut Governorate—the largest governorate in Yemen—and Al-Mahrah Governorate. It also controls large parts of Taiz Governorate, including the governorate's administrative center, represented by the districts of Al-Qahirah, Al-Muzaffar, Salah, Al-Shamayatayn, Saber Al-Mawadem, Al-Misrakh, Mashra'ah, Hadnan, Al-Ma'afer, and Al-Mawasit.

Additionally, the government controls the administrative center of Marib Governorate, including the districts of Marib City, Al-Wadi, Harib, and parts of the Sirwah and Raghwan districts. These are the most densely populated districts in the governorate and host a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country.

The government also controls parts of Shabwah and Abyan governorates, limited areas in Al-Dhale' Governorate, and the districts of Hayran, Midi, and western Bani Hassan in Hajjah Governorate. It holds areas bordering Saudi Arabia in Al-Jawf Governorate, whose population accounts for 3% of the total population of the governorate. These include the desert regions of Al-Riyan, parts of the Khabb wa ash Sha'af District, part of Al-Hazm District, and limited areas in Al-Bayda Governorate.

The STC forces maintain full control over the city of Aden and most parts of Lahj and Abyan governorates. They also control parts of Shabwah and are present in Hadhramaut and Al-Dhale' governorates.

Meanwhile, the Joint Forces led by Tareq Saleh, which receive direct support from the UAE, control the western coastline stretching from the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait to the city of Al Hudaydah. This includes the western coastal districts of Taiz governorate—Mokha, Dhubab, Al-Wazi'iyah, and Mawza'—as well as Al-Khawkhah district in Al Hudaydah governorate and parts of Hays and Al-Jarrahi districts.

The Saudi/UAE-led coalition is present alongside forces such as the STC and the internationally recognized government. Coalition forces are mainly stationed in

parts of Hadhramaut and Al-Mahrah, in Bayhan and Ain districts in Shabwah, and Qa'atabah and Morais districts in Al-Dhale' governorate.

In Aden governorate, the coalition's presence is limited to strategic locations such as Al-Ma'ashiq Palace (the Presidential Palace), which hosts several military brigades. Additionally, Emirati forces maintain full control over Socotra Island, as well as Mayyun Island near the Bab al-Mandab Strait, one of the most strategically important areas under coalition control.

Ansar al-Sharia and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) continue to have a limited presence in villages within Mukayras district, a few villages in Al-Sawma'ah district, a few in Maswarah district in Al-Bayda governorate, and in Al-Saeed district in Shabwah governorate.

In April 2024, Al-Qaeda targeted the Emirati-backed First Shabwah Defense Brigade with improvised explosive devices in the Al-Musainah area. Mudiyah district in Abyan governorate witnessed several attacks targeting forces affiliated with both the internationally recognized government and the STC. Ansar al-Sharia and AQAP elements still control Al-Mahfad district in Abyan.

In a significant development in 2024, a new actor emerged in the Yemeni conflict: U.S. and U.K. forces intervened as part of a multinational maritime coalition known as the "Operation Prosperity Guardian" coalition⁽⁴⁾. This coalition comprises 40 countries and is led by the United States. Its formation was announced by U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on December 18 during a conference in Bahrain.

Under orders from U.S. President Joe Biden, American warplanes launched airstrikes on various areas under Ansar Allah (Houthi) group control starting in January 2024. These attacks came in response to Houthi strikes against Israeli-affiliated vessels in the Red Sea, which the group claimed were part of their declared support for Palestinian factions in Gaza. Ansar Allah (Houthi) group began targeting ships in the Red Sea on November 29, 2023—an action that escalated regional tensions and opened a new front in the Yemeni conflict, further complicating the military and humanitarian situation in Yemen and the broader region⁽⁵⁾.

4. The announcement available in the US Department of Defense website:

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3621110/statement-from-secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iii-on-ensuring-freedom-of-n/>.

5. President Biden's order is available in the US Department of Defense website:

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3644027/us-partners-forces-strike-houthi-military-targets-in-yemen/>.

Moreover, on July 20, 2024, Israeli Defense Forces launched their first airstrikes in Yemen in the context of the ongoing conflict. The attack involved six dual airstrikes targeting oil facilities, fuel storage tanks, and port container areas in Al Hudaydah in western Yemen, resulting in civilian casualties—both dead and wounded—and causing significant damage to port infrastructure.

Third: Ongoing Violations in 2024

The grave violations endured by Yemeni civilians in 2024—whether direct abuses such as killing, maiming, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, sexual violence, child recruitment, and restrictions on freedom of movement, or indirect ones such as sieges and the collapse of essential services—resulted in significant human losses and widespread harm across multiple levels. No segment of society was spared from these violations, which were exacerbated by the complete collapse of infrastructure and the deterioration of the economy and basic services. These combined conditions have dramatically worsened the suffering of Yemenis, subjecting them to catastrophic humanitarian conditions in which securing basic necessities such as food, water, education, and healthcare has become a daily struggle—amid ongoing disregard by the warring parties for their legal and moral obligations under international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and applicable national legislation.

Although 2024 was marked by an undeclared truce and a state of neither war nor peace, civilians continued to suffer on multiple fronts, chief among them being the rise in cases of enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention of civilians, including widespread campaigns of arbitrary detention carried out by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. On 31 May 2024, the group detained employees—both male and female—of local and international humanitarian organizations, as well as current and former staff of foreign diplomatic missions, subjecting them to arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. The group escalated its targeting of humanitarian workers further in June 2024 with a new wave of arbitrary arrests against several staff members of international and local organizations in areas under its control.

Despite a decrease in direct confrontations, the warring parties continued to use drones to carry out multiple attacks, alongside aerial and ground assaults that resulted in civilian casualties. Warring parties also resorted to live ammunition

to target civilians, vehicular assaults using military vehicles, and imposed restrictions or outright bans on the delivery of humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations—blatant violations of international humanitarian law.

Moreover, attacks on medical facilities, including hospitals and health centers, persisted, depriving civilians of access to essential healthcare. Parties to the conflict employed various methods to humiliate civilians and violate their basic rights, in clear contravention of international standards designed to protect civilians during armed conflict.

As active hostilities have waned in recent months, some conflict-affected areas have witnessed a gradual return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and residents to their original communities. However, this return has been fraught with severe risks, including landmine explosions, explosive remnants of war, and abandoned weaponry—particularly in governorates such as Al Hudaydah, Taiz, and several districts in other regions.

The year 2024 also saw a notable increase in violations involving the use and occupation of schools, with a 100% rise compared to the previous year, according to documentation by Mwatana. Parties to the armed conflict repurposed educational facilities in ways that contradict their intended use—including housing soldiers, preparing meals, serving as command centers, and functioning as detention sites. Some schools were even turned into recruitment hubs, in clear violation of children's rights and international laws that protect educational institutions during conflict.

In particular, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group systematically used schools in areas under its control throughout the year to support what it terms «parallel education.» This included the establishment of “Martyr of the Qur'an Schools” within both basic and secondary education systems, where curricula are infused with the group's ideological content alongside specialized combat training. Schoolyards were also widely used for training children in the use of weapons.

Schools have increasingly become centers for political and military indoctrination by conflict parties. In areas under the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group's control, there was an expansion of private educational centers that hosted exhibitions featuring military models, slogans, and propaganda images affiliated with the

— Bloody Gambles —

the group. Summer educational programs—both open and closed—also proliferated, embedding the group's ideological messages into children's minds and involving them in public demonstrations and marches. These practices disrupt the educational role of schools and expose children to systematic political and military exploitation.

In conclusion to its eighth annual report, Mwatana for Human Rights issued a set of recommendations to all parties to the conflict and the international community. These included calls to strengthen international accountability mechanisms, pressure all parties to comply with international law, and intensify efforts to protect civilians.



Fourth: The Humanitarian Situation in Yemen in 2024

Yemen witnessed a significant deterioration in its humanitarian situation due to the ongoing armed conflict that has gripped the country for over a decade. In 2024, the humanitarian crisis continued to worsen tragically. Despite an undeclared truce and a decline in large-scale military operations compared to the early years of the conflict, Yemen remained one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Millions of people—including women and children—suffer from severe hunger, malnutrition, and lack of access to basic health services. The situation has been further exacerbated by damage to vital infrastructure, the spread of epidemics such as cholera, and continued mass displacement caused by the conflict and its repercussions.

According to Julien Harneis, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen⁽⁶⁾, a decade of conflict has left 18 million people in need of humanitarian assistance—about half the population. This dire need stems not from active fighting, but from severe economic decline.

He added that, in absolute numbers, Yemen has the second-highest number of malnourished children in the world. It also ranks second in terms of the number of people unable to access health services. Furthermore, Yemen has the third-largest number of food-insecure people globally—a figure projected to rise to 19 million in 2025. He warned that the situation could worsen, as these estimates are based on assessments made months ago. With the potential escalation of violence involving the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group in northern Yemen and Israel, civilian infrastructure—such as ports, airports, and roads—could be further affected, resulting in even greater suffering for the Yemeni population.

This concern was echoed by UNICEF⁽⁷⁾, which reported a growing number of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition, driven by economic collapse that has pushed families into extreme poverty. The spread of disease, severe food insecurity, and limited access to clean drinking water are all worsening malnutrition—a potentially fatal condition if left untreated, especially in coastal areas.

6. Statement by the UN Resident Coordinator for Yemen, available at the following link:
<https://tinyurl.com/bdebh3ht>.

7. UNICEF, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4cjf2y>.

According to UNICEF's projections⁽⁸⁾, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance will reach 23.7 million in 2024—roughly 72% of the population—including 12.9 million children, or four out of every five. More than 10 million children and about 5 million women are unable to fully access healthcare services.

World Bank data⁽⁹⁾ indicates that the prolonged conflict has resulted in a near-total collapse of economic and social development, severely impacting living standards of the majority of the population. Estimates suggest that Yemen's economy contracted for a second consecutive year by 1% in 2024. Several factors contributed to this contraction, including continued disruption to humanitarian aid flows, obstruction of essential imports, declining remittances, and a lack of income-generating opportunities. These conditions have further deepened Yemen's deteriorating economic and social situation, marked by rising poverty, deprivation, and food insecurity.

Moreover, humanitarian assistance has failed to reach all those in need, due to insufficient funding and an inability to meet overwhelming demand. With crude oil exports halted, the Yemeni rial is expected to further depreciate, fueling persistent increases in the prices of goods and essential services. Since the start of the conflict, food prices have soared, intensifying the food insecurity crisis, which now represents one of the most severe challenges facing Yemen's population.

Currently, more than 17 million people in Yemen suffer from food insecurity, including 3.5 million facing acute malnutrition, putting their lives at immediate risk. At the same time, around 18 million Yemenis are experiencing a severe shortage of clean drinking water and essential sanitation services. This acute lack of resources has led to the repeated outbreak of preventable diseases such as cholera, diphtheria, measles, and dengue fever, further deepening the humanitarian crisis and increasing the burden on the country's already fragile healthcare system⁽¹⁰⁾.

8. UNICEF, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/yemen/ar/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9>.

9. World Bank, available at: <https://www.albankaldawli.org/ar/country/yemen/overview#1>.

10. United Nations, World Water Day, available at the following link:

<https://yemen.un.org/ar/264049%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A-2024>.

Meanwhile, the electricity crisis in Yemen has persisted, with the population enduring a continuous decline in electricity services for years. Fuel shortages and damaged infrastructure have caused an unstable power supply, exacerbating the daily suffering of civilians. In many areas, frequent and prolonged power outages have become the norm.

In the city of Aden, power outages have exceeded 10 hours per day, with only two hours of electricity supply, due to fuel depletion and the shutdown of several power stations. In the capital, Sana'a, the commercial electricity rate ranged between 250 and 300 Yemeni riyals per kilowatt-hour for residential use, while government electricity services from the Haziz and Dhahban power plants came to a halt in November 2024 following Israeli strikes on energy infrastructure in the city. In Taiz, the price per kilowatt-hour for household electricity reached between 1,000 and 2,000 riyals, forcing residents to resort to primitive means due to the high cost of commercial electricity.

In Al Hudaydah Governorate, residents faced power outages throughout the year. The electricity crisis in the governorate was further exacerbated by Israeli Defense Forces targeting the Ras Kantib power station, the city's primary source of energy.

As a result, residents were severely affected, particularly given the high summer temperatures, which can reach up to 48°C in August.

According to UNICEF, the conflict and the collapse of the education system have had a profoundly negative impact on the learning environment for children nationwide. A total of 2,426 schools have been either partially or completely damaged or rendered unfit for use. Statistics indicate that one in four school-aged children is not attending school. Those who are able to attend face major challenges, including inadequate facilities and overburdened teachers, many of whom do not receive their salaries on a regular basis⁽¹¹⁾.

In 2024, the damage to the education sector continued, affecting all aspects of the educational system. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group unilaterally introduced changes to school curricula and widely used both public and private schools to hold religious and political events. This arbitrary use of school facilities disrupted the educational process in many areas.

11. UNICEF, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/ywxemru8>.

A notable disparity also emerged between the school calendars in areas controlled by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group and those under the control of the internationally recognized government. In Houthi-controlled areas, the Hijri (Islamic) calendar was adopted, with the school year beginning in August 2023 and ending in late March 2024. This scheduling forced students in coastal areas to attend classes during periods of extreme heat, which led to the spread of skin diseases in the context of a collapsing healthcare system unable to cope with such challenges.

As for water in Yemen—a country that already suffers from a chronic water crisis under normal circumstances—the situation has significantly worsened during the years of conflict. In 2024, conditions remained unchanged from previous years, with residents gathering around water tanks provided by international and local organizations in urban centers. In rural areas, people were forced to travel long and difficult routes to reach water sources, adding further strain to their daily lives.

Warring parties have planted landmines around water sources located near frontlines in areas such as Sa'ada, Nihm, Al Hudaydah, and Taiz, making access to these sources extremely dangerous. The water crisis has persisted in Taiz Governorate, where the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group controls the main drinking water sources in Al-Hayma and Al-Hawban—both essential to supplying the city with water. This ongoing conflict over vital resources has led to a sharp increase in water prices in the city, which is under the control of the internationally recognized government, deepening the suffering of its residents.

The water crisis has significantly worsened across the country. According to the United Nations⁽¹²⁾, Yemen is among the most water-scarce countries in the world, and rural communities face severe limitations in accessing clean water. In some areas, entire communities are expected to dry up within a few short years. Half of those affected are children, who will require urgent assistance to access basic water and sanitation services. This dire situation highlights the urgent need for sustained humanitarian interventions to alleviate the suffering of the population and ensure their access to clean and safe water.

The economic war between the conflict parties in Yemen has played a central role in deepening the economic and humanitarian crises. These challenges have led to the deterioration of the national economy and the rapid collapse of the local

12. UN Yemen, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/y68a4zzj>

currency. The fragmentation of the economic system—reflected in divergent exchange rates between areas controlled by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group and those under other authorities—has widened the economic gap between different regions, negatively affecting civilians' living conditions. Measures taken against the banking sector, such as decisions targeting banks and their branches in areas controlled by various parties, have further undermined the national economy and dismantled the financial system, exacerbating the country's economic crisis.

In addition, the continued suspension of public sector salaries for over eight years in Houthi-controlled areas has led to an unprecedented deterioration in humanitarian and economic conditions. The failure to pay wages has impoverished a large segment of Yemeni society and left many civilians unable to meet their basic needs, further worsening living conditions and forcing families to endure severe hardships. This suffering persisted throughout 2024.

Despite community-led efforts in June 2024 to reopen key roads—such as Al-Hawban in Taiz, the Ma'rib road in Al-Bayda, Tharah Mountain Pass in Abyan, and the Haifan road in Aden—civilians continue to face enormous challenges in mobility and access to essential services. This is due to the continued closure of many main roads or their contamination with landmines and explosive remnants. It is imperative that all parties commit to reopening all roads and crossings between governorates, ensuring full freedom of movement for civilians and facilitating their safe passage by securing roadways and guaranteeing their protection.

Fifth: International Humanitarian Law and the Armed Conflict in Yemen

The armed conflict in Yemen is classified as a non-international armed conflict. It is therefore governed by the rules of international humanitarian law (IHL) applicable to non-international armed conflicts. This classification is based on the nature of the confrontation, which involves internal parties and organized armed groups with a sufficient level of organization to conduct military operations and adhere to IHL. These parties include the internationally recognized government forces, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, the Southern Transitional Council, and the Joint Forces.

Despite the military interventions led by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition since March 2015, as well as the direct and indirect involvement of other international actors in the context of the armed conflict in Yemen—including logistical and intelligence support from countries like the United States, and the continued export of weapons used in the conflict by certain states—these interventions have not altered the classification of the conflict as non-international. Under international legal standards, such involvement has been deemed indirect and does not constitute a conflict between sovereign states.

As a non-international armed conflict, the situation in Yemen falls under Common Article 3 of the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol II of 1977, in addition to customary international humanitarian law. These legal frameworks impose binding obligations on all parties to the conflict—state and non-state actors alike—to uphold core IHL principles. These include the obligation to distinguish between military objectives and civilians, the principle of proportionality to avoid excessive harm to civilians, and the duty to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians and civilian objects from the effects of hostilities. Moreover, the use of residential areas for military purposes, such as storing weapons or converting civilian facilities into military targets, is strictly prohibited.

IHL also prohibits the use of indiscriminate weapons and disproportionate attacks that cause harm to civilians exceeding the anticipated military advantage. Common Article 3 and Additional Protocol II prohibit violence against persons not taking part in hostilities, including killing, torture, and cruel treatment. They also prohibit the issuance and execution of sentences without fair trials, collective punishment, acts of terror, pillaging, and rape.

States parties and armed groups are obligated to investigate crimes committed during the conflict and ensure accountability for those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Both military and civilian leaders bear responsibility for preventing violations and punishing perpetrators. This includes ensuring that appropriate reparations are made for victims.

In addition to the application of IHL, international human rights law remains applicable during armed conflicts, guaranteeing fundamental rights such as the right to life, the right to a fair trial, and the prohibition of torture and arbitrary detention. Non-state armed groups exercising government-like authority over territory are also bound to respect and protect the rights of individuals in areas under their control.

02

CHAPTER TWO

Key Patterns of Violations in 2024

Throughout 2024, various warring parties—including the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, the internationally recognized government forces, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) in its various formations, the Joint Forces, the Saudi/UAE-led coalition, the US-UK coalition, and Israeli forces—continued to commit different forms of violations involving killings and maiming. These violations resulted in the deaths of 181 civilians, including 45 children and two women, and the injury of 471 civilians, including 220 children and 32 women.

Among the violations committed by the parties to the conflict that led to civilian deaths and injuries—outlined in this chapter of the report—are aerial bombardments (both airstrikes and drone attacks), ground shelling, landmines and explosive remnants of war, in addition to incidents of military vehicle run-overs and live ammunition fire.

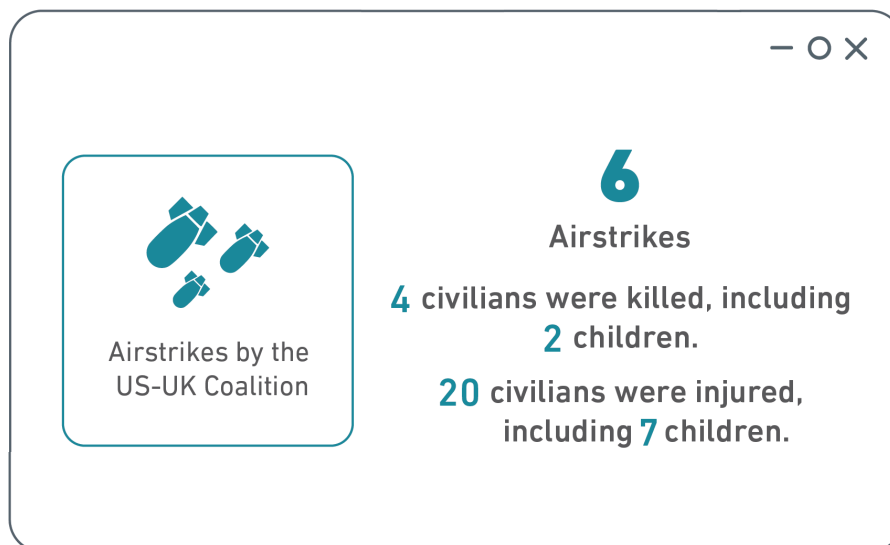
Killings and maiming are among the most serious violations, posing a direct threat to human life. They inflict severe harm on civilians, undermine their fundamental rights to life and personal safety, and leave long-lasting physical and psychological effects on survivors. These acts constitute clear violations of international humanitarian law, which strictly prohibits targeting civilians and mandates their protection from the effects of military operations.

Despite the continued decline in large-scale military operations, the number of civilian casualties—both killed and injured—demonstrates the failure of parties to the conflict to make any meaningful effort to protect civilians or avoid harm to them. It reflects the ongoing violation of the principles and rules of international humanitarian law, which prohibit violence to life and person, particularly in all forms of killing and maiming. All parties to the conflict—regardless of the nature of the armed conflict or the forces involved—are obligated to avoid harming or targeting civilians under any circumstances. They bear the responsibility to protect civilians, uphold their dignity, and enable them to access the fullest extent of their legitimate rights.

First: Airstrikes by the US-UK Coalition "Operation Prosperity Guardian"

Nearly two years after the cessation of airstrikes by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition, civilians in Yemen found themselves facing new aerial assaults—this time by the US-UK coalition, known as Operation Prosperity Guardian⁽¹³⁾. In 2024, the US-UK coalition carried out seven aerial attacks, including one drone strike, across various locations under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, such as Sana'a, Al Hudaydah, Sa'dah, Dhamar, and Taiz.

In 2024, Mwatana verified the responsibility of the US-UK coalition (Operation Prosperity Guardian) for six airstrikes, which resulted in the deaths of four civilians—including two children—and injuries to 20 others, including seven children. These strikes also caused widespread damage to infrastructure and vital facilities.



13. In this report, the term "U.S.-U.K. coalition" or "Operation Prosperity Guardian" refers to the international maritime coalition announced by U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin during a conference held in Bahrain on December 18, 2023. It is a multinational naval coalition comprising 40 countries and led by the United States. According to the coalition's formation announcement, it was established in response to threats posed by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The initiative is a new multinational security effort operating under the framework of the Combined Maritime Forces and led by its Task Force 153, which focuses on security in the Red Sea. The coalition aims to jointly address security challenges in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, ensure freedom of navigation for all nations, and enhance regional security and prosperity.



“

I was struck in the middle of
my back, fracturing the fourth and
fifth lumbar vertebrae, and another
piece of shrapnel fractured my
right rib.

”

Examples of Airstrikes by the US-UK Coalition

“ On Sunday, February 25, 2024, at around 12:00 a.m., a US-UK coalition airstrike targeted the mountain of Al-Sayyada village in the Al-Aqhoz subdistrict, Maqbana district, Taiz governorate. The strike killed a 32-year-old civilian male and injured six others with varying degrees of wounds. The peak of the targeted mountain hosts telecommunications equipment belonging to Yemeni telecom companies. The explosion occurred just 15 meters from a group of civilians who had climbed the mountain to socialize and observe the religious occasion of Sha'baniyah.

Survivors reported hearing the aircraft before the powerful explosion, which caused visible destruction. Locals immediately transported the wounded to Al-Barh Rural Hospital, after which they were referred to hospitals in Ibb and Sana'a for further treatment. ”

One of the injured told Mwatana, “We were seven friends and had decided earlier in the day to climb the mountain at night to celebrate Sha'baniyah (the night of 14 Sha'ban), as we usually do. The mountain is about 300 meters from Al-Sayyada village and is the only recreational escape we have. On the evening of Sunday, February 25, 2024, while we were gathered at the peak, we were startled by a powerful explosion near the telecom towers. The sound was terrifying—it happened just 15 meters from where we were sitting. There were no Ansar Allah (Houthi) group fighters in the area.

We were all hit by shrapnel and taken to Al-Barh Rural Hospital for first aid. I was struck in the middle of my back, fracturing the fourth and fifth lumbar vertebrae, and another piece of shrapnel fractured my right rib. I was later transferred to the military hospital in Al-Ta'iziyah district, in the city of Al-Saleh, to continue treatment. One of our friends died from his wounds at Al-Barh Rural Hospital⁽¹⁴⁾.”

14. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team with a survivor on March 6, 2024 in Maqbana district of Taiz governorate.

Another injured civilian (33 years old), also from Al-Sayyada village, told Mwatana, “My friends and I regularly go up the mountain next to the telecom towers—it’s the only place with good cell coverage and fresh air. On the night of Sha’baniyah (14 Sha’ban), which fell on Saturday, February 24, 2024, we gathered after the evening prayer to socialize and celebrate the occasion at the mountaintop. At around midnight on Sunday, February 25, 2024, the towers were hit by a US-UK airstrike. We were all injured.

I was first treated at Al-Barh Rural Hospital and then transferred to the military hospital in Al-Saleh compound, Al-Ta’iziyah district. I had multiple shrapnel wounds—one fractured my right femur, another hit my right knee joint, and another struck my left knee. I also had shrapnel wounds behind my right shoulder, and in the upper, middle, and lower parts of my back. Shrapnel was removed from my knees and back, and I underwent surgery to insert plates and screws to stabilize the fractured femur.

Our friend died of his injuries at Al-Barh Rural Hospital. Another friend, who was severely injured, is still receiving treatment at Al-Thawra Hospital in Ibb, and another is currently being treated at a hospital in Sana’a⁽¹⁵⁾.”

“ On Thursday, June 13, 2024, at approximately 1:00 a.m., the US-UK coalition launched an airstrike on the administrative center of Raymah Governorate, targeting the Government Street in Al-Jabin District. The strike hit the government complex and the headquarters of Raymah Radio, located within the complex. The attack resulted in the complete destruction of the radio station and injured five civilians from the same family, aged between 13 and 45 years old, who were originally from Al-Marrawah District in Al Hudaydah Governorate. ”

At the time of the strike, the victims were working on the construction of a hall within the government complex, located just 11 meters from the radio building. They were transferred to Al-Thulatha Hospital, located in the governorate center to receive medical treatment. It is worth noting that Raymah Radio was the first local radio station in the governorate and had only been inaugurated in January 2024. The initial airstrike caused the station to cease operations, depriving approximately 150,000 listeners of its services.

15. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team with a survivor on March 6, 2024 in Maqbana district of Taiz governorate.

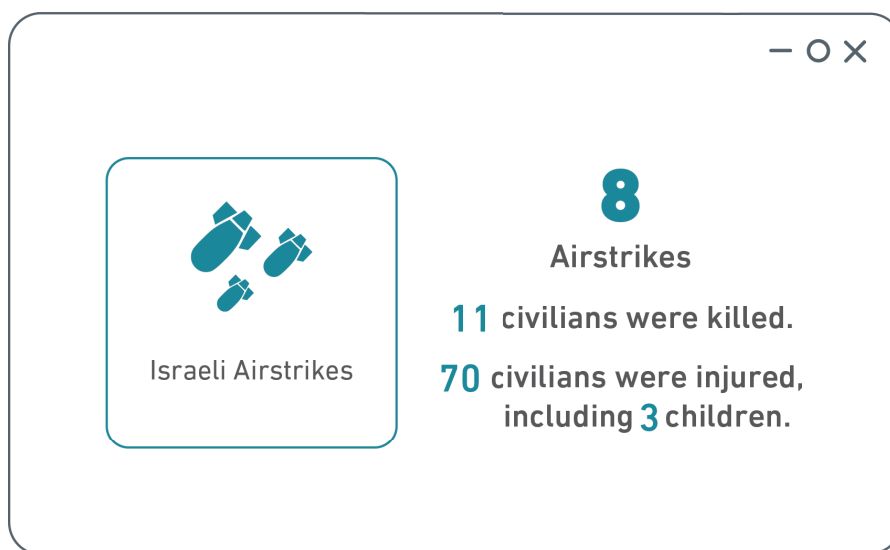
Seven days later, at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 19, 2024, the US-UK coalition again targeted the radio building and government complex with five additional airstrikes, resulting in the total destruction of the remaining structures of both the radio station and the government complex.

Second: Israeli Airstrikes

In 2024, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) carried out a series of airstrikes targeting critical civilian infrastructure in the governorates of Sana'a and Al Hudaydah. These strikes included attacks on major ports, power generation stations, and Sana'a International Airport. The escalation followed an announcement by the Israeli Ministry of Defense on July 20, 2024, declaring the launch of a large-scale military operation against the Houthis and infrastructure in areas under their control.⁽¹⁶⁾ This came in response to several attacks carried out by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group in the Red Sea against Israeli vessels or those bound for Israel, in addition to attacks on Israeli territory coinciding with the military offensive by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip — an operation that, according to international reports and statements, involved a wide range of violations and atrocities, including the gravest international crimes such as war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity.

The Israeli Defense Forces are responsible for eight airstrikes that killed 11 civilians and injured 70 others, including three children. The strikes targeted key infrastructure such as the ports of Al Hudaydah, Ras Issa, and Al Salif, as well as power stations in Sana'a and Al Hudaydah, Sana'a International Airport, and other facilities.

16. IDF announcement, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/3h8vrhcs>.



Examples of Israeli Airstrikes

“ On Saturday, July 20, 2024, at approximately 5:50 p.m., Israeli fighter jets launched six dual airstrikes on oil facilities and fuel storage tanks at Al Hudaydah Port in Al Mina District, Al Hudaydah Governorate in northwestern Yemen. The attack killed nine workers at the port facilities and injured over 80 others. The strikes also caused severe damage to gantry cranes at the port and either completely or partially destroyed approximately 43 fuel tanks and transport tankers. Additionally, the strikes targeted the central power generation station in the Al Kathib area, Al Salif District, destroying three fuel tanks. This led to a total shutdown of the electricity supply to Al Hudaydah city causing significant damage and sparking massive fires that firefighting teams were unable to contain, which continued to burn into the following day.

Al Hudaydah Port is considered a lifeline for millions of Yemenis, as over 80% of humanitarian aid, essential goods, and fuel — on which more than 28 million people rely for survival — enter the country through it⁽¹⁷⁾.

17. Mwatana calls for an international investigation into the Israeli attacks on Al Hudaydah, press release, at the following link: <https://www.mwatana.org/posts/mwatana-calls-for-international-investigation-into-israeli-attacks-on-hodeidah>

The attacks also triggered a significant wave of displacement among residents in the vicinity. According to Mwatana estimates, around 100 families were displaced from the Al Kathib area of Al Salif District (home to the power plant workers), while an estimated 150 families were displaced from the port area. These families fled to central Al Hudaydah city and to Sana'a Governorate. ■■

■ On Thursday, December 26, 2024, at approximately 4:45 p.m., Israeli fighter jets carried out 13 airstrikes in the Al Salif area, Al Salif District, Al Hudaydah Governorate. The strikes targeted the Ras Katnib Central Power Plant, which is operated by the Ministry of Electricity and Energy and the Public Electricity Corporation. The attack led to the complete destruction and shutdown of the station. Five transformers (11/132 kV), two transformers (33/132 kV), and all circuit breakers at the substation were destroyed. The solar power project (35–37 MW capacity) was damaged, and five fuel tanks, each with a 2,500-cubic-meter capacity — each powering a 30 MW unit — were hit. Eight civilian workers were injured. ■■

This same power station had already been targeted earlier, on Sunday, September 29, 2024, at around 5:55 p.m., when the Israeli forces launched seven successive airstrikes. More than ten civilian workers sustained injuries ranging from moderate to severe and were transported to Al-Thawra General Hospital for treatment.

The repeated targeting led to the station's complete shutdown. As it supplies electricity not only to Al Hudaydah Governorate but also to other regions of the country, restoring it to full operational capacity will require billions of dollars, extensive effort, and a significant amount of time. This will have a deeply negative impact on electricity availability and may force individuals to resort to alternative sources such as solar panels or commercial electricity — both of which are prohibitively expensive and largely inaccessible to the majority of civilians, especially in Al Hudaydah and similar regions where incomes are very limited. The situation is expected to worsen during the summer months due to heightened demand for electricity in coastal areas, such as Al Hudaydah, where cooling systems are essential for coping with extreme heat.

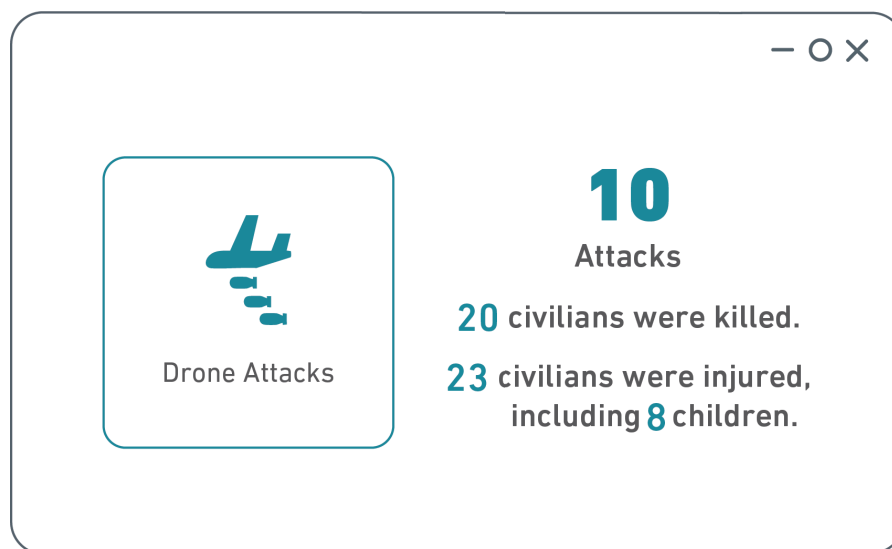


x o -

Airstrike – Hodeidah Port
20.07.2024

Third: Drone Attacks

During 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 10 drone and locally manufactured UAV attacks that resulted in the deaths of 10 civilians—including one child—and injuries to 23 others, including 8 children. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 6 of these attacks using locally made drones. The Saudi/UAE-led coalition was responsible for two drone attacks, while the U.S.-U.K.-led “Operation Prosperity Guardian” coalition was responsible for one. The internationally recognized government was responsible for one drone attack using a locally made UAV.



Examples of Drone Attacks

“ On the morning of Sunday, May 12, 2024, at around 9:00 a.m., the village of Al-Mafalis in the Al-Athawir subdistrict of Hayfan District, Taiz Governorate, was hit by a drone strike carried out by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The attack killed a one-and-a-half-year-old child, who was struck by shrapnel in the neck and died instantly, and injured his 22-year-old mother, who sustained shrapnel wounds to both shoulders. ”

The incident occurred as the child's father, an officer in the National Shield Forces, returned home in a military vehicle. He had parked it in the yard and entered his room to rest. Shortly afterward, residents heard the sound of a drone overhead. The drone launched two 60mm shells at the house. One shell exploded, killing the infant and injuring his mother; the other failed to detonate.

A neighbor rushed the victims to Tur Al-Baha Hospital. The child was pronounced dead on arrival, while the mother received emergency treatment. Notably, the village of Al-Mafalis is located approximately three kilometers from military sites held by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group to the south.

The child's maternal uncle (34-year-old male) told Mwatana,

" I received a call from neighbors in Al-Mafalis, in the northern part of Tur Al-Baha District, which is administratively part of Hayfan District, Taiz Governorate. They informed me that my sister's house had been targeted and that there were casualties in her family. At the time, I was on duty at the Tur Al-Baha General Hospital, the district's main medical center in Lahj Governorate. I waited until the victims were brought in.

When the vehicle arrived, I was shocked to see that the child was among the wounded, and even more devastated when I saw the blood streaming from his neck. He had died before reaching the hospital. We were all overwhelmed with grief, especially the parents, who were in a state of severe shock and emotional distress.

Later, we returned the child's body to the village. The shock intensified when I saw my 22-year-old sister injured with shrapnel wounds in both shoulders. Her injuries were superficial, but the emotional trauma was immense. I felt as if I might lose consciousness from the anguish. My sister, too, had passed out from the shock of losing her infant son right before her eyes. She was treated afterward at Tur Al-Baha General Hospital⁽¹⁸⁾."

18. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team with the child's uncle in Al-Shaikh Othman district, Aden, on June 28, 2024

“ On Saturday, July 6, 2024, around 2:00 p.m., a drone operated by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition targeted a farm in the village of Bani Haddad in Haradh District, Hajjah Governorate. The attack injured a 60-year-old male civilian who was herding sheep on the targeted farm. He sustained shrapnel injuries to both hands, his chest, and face. One of his sons and some local residents helped him return home before he was transported by a resident’s car to the Médecins Sans Frontières hospital in Abs City. There, he received first aid before being transferred to the Republican Hospital in Hajjah City for a ten-day treatment period, which the family covered at their own expense.

The village of Bani Haddad lies in close proximity to the Saudi border, underscoring the increasing risks faced by its residents⁽¹⁹⁾. ”

Fourth: The Legal Framework Governing Aerial Attacks, Including Airstrikes and Drone Strikes

International humanitarian law sets out a body of rules and principles aimed at protecting civilians and others who are no longer taking part in hostilities, such as the wounded and prisoners of war. This body of law obligates all parties to a conflict to take necessary measures to minimize civilian harm to the greatest extent possible during military operations.

IHL emphasizes the obligation to distinguish between military objectives and civilian objects, stipulating that all attacks must be directed solely at legitimate military targets. Parties to a conflict are required to take all feasible precautions to minimize potential harm to civilians. Military commanders must assess the expected civilian harm and destruction in relation to the anticipated military advantage of a given target before launching any attack and must refrain from launching disproportionate attacks. Indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks carried out with criminal intent may constitute war crimes under international law.

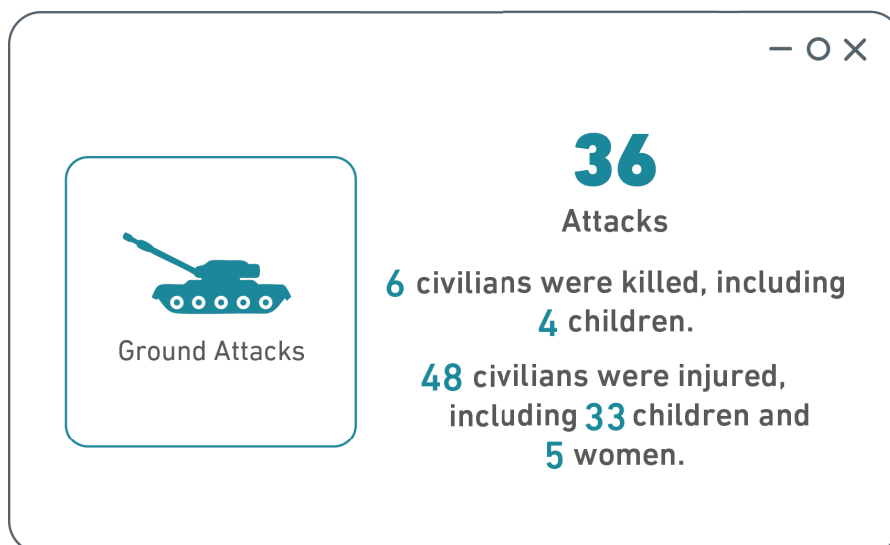
19. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Haradh district of Hajjah governorate on October 1, 2024.

Attacks that are expected to cause widespread civilian harm that outweighs the anticipated military advantage are strictly prohibited. International rules further require that clear and effective measures be taken to protect civilians, including issuing effective warnings when civilian harm is foreseeable.

Given that most of the attacks documented by Mwatana for Human Rights in 2024—including airstrikes, drone strikes, and attacks by locally operated drones—targeted civilian sites and objects, some of which are essential to the survival of the civilian population, and in light of the absence of any military objectives near most of the targeted sites, these attacks constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. These violations, alongside others of a similar nature, necessitate transparent and impartial investigations, the collection of evidence, and the prosecution of those responsible to ensure justice and redress for the victims.

Fifth: Ground Attacks

Mwatana for Human Rights documented no fewer than 36 incidents of ground shelling, which resulted in the deaths of 6 civilians—including 4 children—and the injury of 48 others, including 33 children and 5 women. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 23 of these incidents. The Saudi/UAE-led coalition, including Saudi Border Guard forces, was responsible for 9 incidents. The internationally recognized government was responsible for 3 incidents, while the Joint Forces were responsible for 1 incident.



Examples of Ground Attacks

“ On Friday, May 10, 2024, at approximately 5:00 a.m., the Wadi Alab area in Baqim District, Sa’dah Governorate, was subjected to a ground attack by Saudi Border Guard forces stationed on Mount Alab, which overlooks the Alab border crossing. The attack involved launching two projectiles at a group of individuals attempting to cross into Saudi Arabia irregularly, resulting in injuries to three Ethiopian migrants, including two children. Among the victims was a 16-year-old boy who sustained shrapnel wounds to his lower abdomen, and a 17-year-old boy who was hit by shrapnel in the chest and neck. The injured were transferred to Al-Salam Hospital in Sa’dah city, where they received necessary medical care and were discharged three days later. ”

African migrants face various forms of abuse during their journey through Yemeni governorates en route to Saudi Arabia at the hands of various conflict parties, with excessive use of force being among the most common violations.

A nurse at Al-Salam Hospital who treated the victims (male, 29 years old) told Mwatana, “It was Friday, around noon, when we received three Ethiopian migrants with serious shrapnel wounds sustained in the Alab area, Baqim District, Sa’dah Governorate. According to accounts, the incident occurred as they attempted to cross into Saudi Arabia.

The injured were minors. One of them, a porter, had shrapnel wounds to the lower abdomen, some of which struck arteries, causing severe bleeding that required a blood transfusion. He remained under medical care for three days and was scheduled for follow-ups in the surgical clinic. The other child, around 17 years old and also working as a porter, had shrapnel injuries to the chest and center of the neck. Due to heavy blood loss, his hemoglobin dropped to 12, and he received two units of blood. He also stayed at the hospital for three days to receive necessary care. The third injured person, a 23-year-old smuggler, sustained shrapnel wounds to the middle of his left leg.

They received medical care despite lacking companions and were silent when we asked about the incident. Such injuries are rare in this area, which is a conflict zone under the control of Saudi ground forces (Saudi Border Guards). Alab border area, about 90 km from the center of Sa'dah Governorate, is known for its sensitivity and history of conflict, raising questions about their decision to cross from such a dangerous area.

The route through Wadi Alab offers quick access to Saudi territory, but given the area's security risks and the presence of landmines planted by the internationally recognized government, the injured were likely targets⁽²⁰⁾."

🗨 On Saturday, March 16, 2024, at around 6:00 p.m., the Yemeni News Agency Saba (Taiz branch) building in the central Asifra neighborhood, Al-Qahira District, Taiz Governorate, was subjected to ground shelling by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group using a mortar shell. The shelling injured three members of the marginalized community: two children aged two and eleven, and their father, who were sitting near the agency's entrance. 🗨

The first victim, a two-year-old child, sustained severe injuries, including a 95% fracture in his left wrist, shrapnel that caused his intestines to protrude from his abdomen, and additional shrapnel wounds to his back and left ear. The second victim, an eleven-year-old boy, was hit by shrapnel in the ring finger of his right hand and in the back. The third victim, a 34-year-old man and father of the two children, suffered two fractures in the upper right thigh, a shrapnel wound to the chest, and another near his right ear.

The victims were taken to Al-Thawra General Hospital for treatment. Notably, no clashes were taking place in the area at the time of the incident, and the mortar shell fell without warning, making this an indiscriminate attack against civilians.

20. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team with a nurse Al-Salam Hospital in Sa'dah district of Sa'dah overnorate on July 1, 2024.

“

I ran out of the house like a madwoman, consumed by fear. I was terrified for my children and husband, and I was also afraid the shelling would resume. I didn't know what to do—whether to hide or move—but my fear for my family pushed me to act despite all the dangers.

”

The mother of the two child victims (33 years old) told Mwatana, “On the day of the incident, in terrifying moments etched in my memory, I heard the sound of the projectile landing and the massive explosion that shook the entire area. This was followed by my husband screaming with all his might. Those were some of the most horrifying moments of my life. We belong to the marginalized community, and our homes are located below the Yemeni News Agency building, about 40 meters to the north of the site of the incident.

A few minutes before the shell landed, my husband went out with our children, saying he was heading to the nearby market to get ice. Then he decided to sit for a while next to the agency building, and only moments later, the shell fell. It had been fired from al-Harir area, from a position where the Houthis are stationed. The shrapnel from the blast flew with such force that it reached our homes, and I saw thick black smoke filling the air.

I ran out of the house like a madwoman, consumed by fear. I was terrified for my children and husband, and I was also afraid the shelling would resume. I didn’t know what to do—whether to hide or move—but my fear for my family pushed me to act despite all the dangers.”

She added, “After the incident, my husband and children were taken to the hospital to receive the necessary treatment. I was in a state of shock and grief, especially since we couldn’t afford the cost of medical care. Fortunately, one of the humanitarian organizations—I don’t know its name—covered all the medical expenses.

Despite the pain I went through, I felt grateful, and I found myself questioning the harsh fate that had been reserved for me and my family. It was as if life had decided to test my patience in those cruel moments, and all I could do was cling to hope and stand by my family during this difficult time⁽²¹⁾.”

On the morning of Wednesday, July 10, 2024, at approximately 7:00 a.m., government forces internationally recognized launched a shell onto the roof of a civilian’s home in the village of Habour, located in Saber Al-Mawadem district of Taiz governorate. The shelling resulted in the injury of seven children and an elderly man. Residents of the village reported hearing gunfire, followed by the explosion of the shell.

21. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team with the victims’ mother in Al-Qahirah district of Taiz governorate on March 18, 2024.

This attack came after the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group had fired a 120mm mortar shell at an excavator operated by workers who were clearing a road in the area to facilitate the movement of residents. Habour village is a frontline area situated in the midst of the conflict and is under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group.

The victims were initially taken to a hospital in Dimnat Khadir district, then transferred to Al-Hawban, before being moved to Al-Qa'eda and finally to Ibb governorate.

This incident encapsulates the ongoing suffering endured by civilians amid the protracted conflict⁽²²⁾.

A 70-year-old civilian man died from shrapnel injuries to the brain and the left side of his body seven days after the incident. The ages of the other injured children ranged between 4 and 12 years. One child (male, 4 years old) died from multiple shrapnel wounds. A five-year-old girl also sustained serious injuries that led to her death. Another five-year-old girl was injured by shrapnel in her right leg, another in her left toe, and two more in the right and left sides of her forehead.

An 8-year-old boy was hit by shrapnel in his foot, an 11-year-old boy sustained shrapnel injuries in his abdomen, and a 12-year-old boy was struck by shrapnel in his chest. A 7-year-old girl was hit by four pieces of shrapnel in her thighs.

Sixth: The Legal Framework on Ground Attacks

IHL prohibits indiscriminate attacks and bans the use of weapons that cannot be accurately directed at military targets—particularly in the context of ground offensives. Warring parties are obligated to choose means and methods of warfare that can be precisely aimed in order to minimize potential harm to civilians and their property. IHL also emphasizes strict adherence to the principle of distinction between military objectives and civilian objects during hostilities.

22. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Saber Al-Mawadem district of Taiz governorate on August 7, 2024.

Furthermore, IHL imposes a duty on parties to armed conflict to protect civilians within areas under their control from the dangers of military operations. It strictly prohibits the placement of military objectives within or near densely populated residential areas and requires parties to refrain from launching attacks that may cause excessive loss of civilian life or damage to civilian property in relation to the anticipated military advantage.

Indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks, particularly those carried out with criminal intent or in violation of these rules, constitute serious breaches of IHL and may, under certain conditions, amount to war crimes.

Seventh: Landmines and Explosive Remnants

Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to pose a deadly threat to civilians in Yemen. These weapons, planted in various locations—including farmland, roads, and residential areas—have killed and injured hundreds of civilians over the course of the conflict. Many survivors have sustained permanent disabilities. In addition to the physical toll, mines and ERWs have impeded civilian access to essential services, humanitarian aid, and workplaces, forcing thousands to flee their villages and homes, thereby worsening the humanitarian crisis.

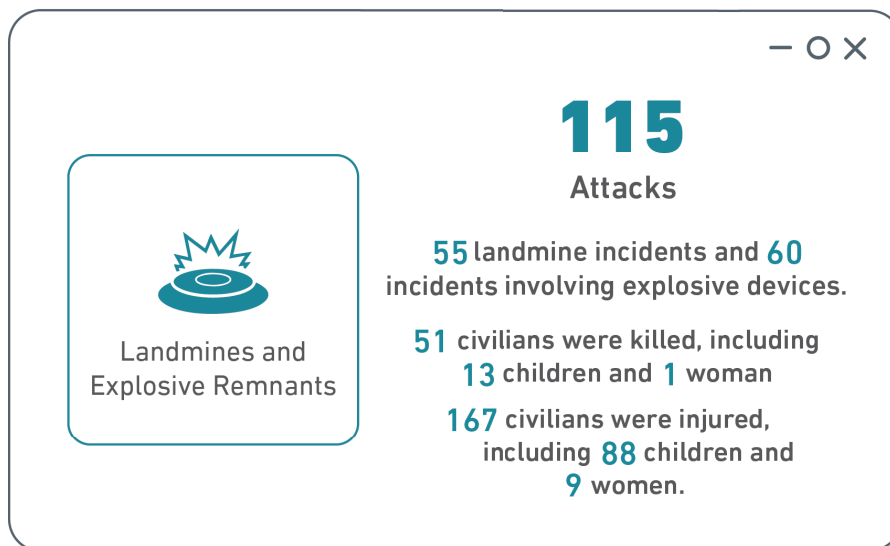
The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, alongside other conflict parties, has used landmines extensively, including anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. They have also deployed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other remnants of war in an indiscriminate manner, adversely impacting civilians' rights to life, food, safe movement, work, and other fundamental rights.

In 2024, the number of mine-related explosions increased as civilians began returning to their homes and villages after years of displacement, clinging to hopes of reclaiming the lives they lost to the conflict. However, the landmines and explosive remnants left behind by warring parties have become a major obstacle to realizing that hope. Mines scattered across fields, roads, grazing lands, and near water sources have turned return areas into zones fraught with danger.

Despite repeated calls for warring parties to fulfill their legal and humanitarian obligations, they have failed to provide mine maps or conduct the

necessary surveys to clear contaminated areas, in blatant violation of their obligations under international humanitarian law.

In 2024, Mwatana documented 115 incidents involving landmines and explosive remnants, including 55 landmine incidents and 60 explosive device incidents. These incidents involved anti-personnel and anti-vehicle landmines, booby traps, disguised devices, and remnants of munitions such as spent shell casings, hand grenades, IEDs, and other ground-launched ordnance. These incidents resulted in the deaths of 51 civilians, including 13 children and one woman, and injuries to 167 civilians, including 88 children and 9 women.



Responsibility for these incidents is distributed as follows:

- The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group is responsible for 54 landmine incidents and 28 explosive device incidents.
- The internationally recognized government is responsible for 16 explosive device incidents.
- The Southern Transitional Council is responsible for 12 explosive device incidents.
- The Saudi/UAE-led coalition is responsible for one explosive device incident.
- Terrorist organizations are responsible for one landmine and one explosive device incident.
- The Joint Forces are responsible for two explosive device incidents.

These incidents were recorded across 14 Yemeni governorates, with Al Hudaydah governorate registering the highest level and concentration of mine contamination, followed by Taiz, Al Jawf, Hajjah, Marib, Al Bayda, Sana'a, Al-Dhale', Lahj, Sa'dah, Shabwah, Abyan, Aden, and Ibb.

Examples of Landmine and Explosive Remnant Incidents

“ On Thursday, June 1, 2023, at approximately 8:30 a.m., in the Kahboub area of Al-Mudhareba and Ras Al-Arah District in Lahj Governorate, a child (Ali Mohammed – pseudonym, 11 years old, male) sustained serious injuries while herding sheep. The child discovered a strange object with wires—an explosive remnant left behind by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, which had previously occupied the area. When he attempted to strike the object with a stone out of curiosity, it detonated, causing shrapnel injuries that led to the amputation of parts of two fingers on his right hand and injuries to the elbow of the same arm. His 40-year-old father rushed him to Dhubab Hospital in a civilian vehicle, after which he was transferred by ambulance to Al-Buraihi Hospital in Aden, where he underwent reconstructive surgery on his hand. The family bore the cost of treatment with the help of local villagers, in the absence of any support or acknowledgment from relevant authorities. No investigation was carried out, nor was any assistance provided by competent bodies at the time of documentation, highlighting the ongoing neglect of war remnants' victims and the lethal dangers civilians continue to face in conflict-affected areas. ”

The child's father (male, 41 years old) told Mwatana, “I'm a resident of the Kahboub area. We are Bedouins who primarily depend on herding as our main source of livelihood. We raise sheep that provide us with milk and other products for our daily sustenance. Our family lives in this vast desert environment of mountains and valleys, moving from place to place in search of grazing land for our animals. This has been our way of life for generations, just as our forefathers lived before us.

On the morning of the incident, my son Ali, who is 11 years old, went out to herd the sheep, as he usually does in rotation with his brother and some of the village children. The grazing area he headed to is about two kilometers from our home, a location where animals are regularly herded and where water is available for them around midday.

My son is still a child in the fifth grade and is not fully aware of the dangers posed by explosive remnants that he might come across while grazing. On that day, he found a strange object resembling a detonator, with visible small wires, a remnant left behind by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. Driven by curiosity, he struck the object with a stone, causing it to explode. We didn't initially hear the explosion due to the direction of the northern wind, which muffled the sound. Some time later, another child came and informed us of what had happened.

When I arrived at the scene, I found my son severely injured. Two of his fingers were partially amputated, and he had other injuries to his elbow. I immediately transported him to Dhubab Hospital in Dhubab District, Taiz Governorate, for emergency care.

Three years earlier, another one of my children had been injured in a similar incident in the same area due to landmines and still suffers from shrapnel embedded in his knee. Despite our suffering, there has been no interest from the concerned authorities in investigating these incidents or providing any necessary support.

We, the residents of this area, constantly feel threatened due to the presence of landmines and remnants of war in our lands, placing our children's lives at constant risk. Our children face this danger when they go to fetch water or herd animals, and we never know if they will return safely. We ask for nothing more than to live in a safe, mine-free environment, and we demand the removal of this threat from our lands. We have been deprived of the most basic necessities of life, such as education and healthcare. All we ask now is to live in peace in a homeland free from landmines and remnants of war⁽²³⁾.

Residents in areas contaminated with landmines face great difficulty accessing water sources, grazing lands, schools, and health centers for basic services—challenges that Mwatana has documented in numerous landmine-related incidents over the years of the conflict.

23. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Madharebah district of Lahj governorate on September 1, 2024.

“

while Omar was lying on the ground,
covered in blood. It was a terrifying
moment—I couldn't even approach
him out of fear that more landmines
might be in the area.

”

“ On the morning of Thursday, February 1, 2024, at approximately 8:00 a.m., a landmine planted by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group detonated in the village of Bani Al-Mash, Bani Hassan subdistrict, Abs District, Hajjah Governorate. The explosion resulted in the death of a child, Omar Hassan (pseudonym – 14 years old, male).

The child was herding sheep when the landmine exploded, causing catastrophic injuries: both of his legs were amputated at the knees, his right hand was severed at the wrist, and his left arm was amputated at the elbow. He also sustained shrapnel injuries to his chest, abdomen, and face. The child was rushed to a clinic in the Hayran area, then transferred to King Fahd Hospital in the Jazan region of Saudi Arabia, where he remained unconscious until he succumbed to his injuries two days later.

The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group had planted landmines in the area during their control, prior to their withdrawal in late March 2019. This tragic incident underscores the ongoing threat to civilians—especially children—in areas still contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war. ■■

The victim's uncle (28 years old), who is also a first responder, told Mwatana, “The child, Omar Hassan, was herding sheep with two of his uncles near a grazing area about 50 meters north of the village. The sheep they were tending belonged to several families in the village, who depend on this activity as a source of livelihood. The children left home after breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and arrived at the pasture around 8:00. While they were trying to gather scattered sheep, Omar stepped on a landmine, which triggered the explosion.

When I heard the blast, I rushed to the scene on my motorcycle. I found the two other children in a state of shock and fear, while Omar was lying on the ground, covered in blood. It was a terrifying moment—I couldn't even approach him out of fear that more landmines might be in the area.

The child was taken to a local clinic and later transferred to King Fahd Hospital in Jazan, Saudi Arabia, but he died two days later from his severe injuries. This incident broke our hearts—we experienced shock and grief. The victim's mother and father could not accept the manner in which he died. Mourning hangs over our lives.”⁽²⁴⁾

24. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Abs district of Hajjah governorate on February 12, 2024.

This tragedy highlights the persistent danger posed by landmines, which continue to threaten the lives of civilians—particularly in rural areas that rely heavily on agriculture and livestock herding as primary sources of income.

“ On Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at around 3:30 p.m., a tragic incident occurred in the Al-Khabt area of Al-Jerbah Al-Ulya village, Al-Jahbah subdistrict, Ad-Durayhimi District, Al Hudaydah Governorate, when a landmine planted by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group exploded. The explosion injured two young girls who had been herding sheep at the time. ”

The first child, Bashayer (pseudonym – female, 5 years old), was hit by shrapnel near her right eye. The second child, Aisha (pseudonym – female, 12 years old), suffered severe injuries that led to the amputation of both her legs at the knees and a shrapnel wound to her right hand.

Both girls were transported by motorcycle to a local clinic in the nearby village of Al-Shajan for initial emergency care. They were later transferred to Al-Thawra Hospital in the city of Al Hudaydah, where they underwent necessary surgeries and had shrapnel removed. Their medical care was supported by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

The landmines had been planted in the area during the period when the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group controlled it. This incident underscores the ongoing threat landmines pose to the lives of children and rural communities in Yemen, highlighting the urgent need for effective demining efforts and measures to protect civilians.

The father of Aisha and uncle of Bashayer said, “I was herding sheep in the Al-Khabt area, north of Al-Jahbah Al-Ulya village in Ad-Durayhimi District, Al Hudaydah Governorate, accompanied by my daughter Aisha (12 years old) and my niece Bashayer (5 years old). While we were herding, Aisha stepped on a landmine, which exploded and flung her backward, causing her to fall on her back. Bashayer was nearby—about five or six meters away—and was struck by a piece of shrapnel near her right eye.

I was about twenty meters away when I heard the explosion. I ran toward the girls, shouting and calling for help. Aisha was lying on the ground, bleeding heavily. Both of her legs had been amputated at the knees, and she had a shrapnel injury to her right hand. My niece, Bashayer, was also injured but in better condition.

One of the local beekeepers arrived on his motorcycle. Together, we transported the girls to a nearby clinic in Al-Shajan village, where Aisha received first aid, including an injection to stop the bleeding. We then transferred her to Al-Thawra Hospital in Al Hudaydah, where she underwent surgeries and treatment with support from the DRC.

This war may be over, but death by landmines continues to stalk us. During the conflict, we were displaced from our village to the eastern part of Beit Al-Faqih District and only returned two years ago. Upon our return, we discovered that our village and surrounding areas were littered with landmines planted during the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group's control. I rely on raising livestock, farming, and collecting firewood—barely enough to provide the essentials for my family. If any of my children get sick, I'm forced to borrow money to afford their treatment. Had the DRC not covered Aisha's medical costs, she would have died before my eyes—I didn't even have the money to pay for a single injection.

My daughter Aisha is now without legs. She is in desperate need of prosthetics so she can live with dignity like other children. This incident stole her childhood and plunged us into a cycle of pain and deprivation⁽²⁵⁾."

“ On Wednesday, February 21, 2024, a landmine planted by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group exploded on a side road in the northern Al-Salam neighborhood, Al-Hali District, Al Hudaydah Governorate, at approximately 1:30 p.m. The incident injured three individuals, aged 11, 17, and 20, as they were returning home on a donkey-drawn cart after collecting firewood. The victims sustained various shrapnel injuries and were transported to Al-Thawra General Hospital in Al Hudaydah for treatment. Save the Children and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) covered the medical expenses. ”

25. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Hawk district of Al Hudaydah governorate on February 14, 2024.

The father of one of the victims (50 years old) told Mwatana, “On the day of the incident, my 20-year-old son and I were collecting firewood and transporting it on carts on our way home. I was about 20 meters away from my son and his two companions, aged 11 and 17, when I heard a loud explosion. I quickly turned around, but thick dust had filled the air and I couldn’t see anything.

As the dust began to clear, I rushed to the site and found my son Mohammed screaming in pain, saying, ‘Father, my leg, my leg hurts.’ I tied his leg with his clothes to stop the bleeding. Then I looked around and saw the two boys lying on the ground. I gathered all of them and transported them on my donkey back to the neighborhood (northern Al-Salam). From there, I got help from a neighbor who drove us to Al-Thawra Hospital...

The road where the explosion occurred had no warning signs indicating the presence of landmines. We used that road daily and had no idea it was mined. It seems the entire area is randomly mined. This incident has left us—and all the residents of the neighborhood—gripped with sorrow and deep fear⁽²⁶⁾.”

The suffering of civilians continues due to the indiscriminate use of landmines, underscoring the urgent need to clear war remnants and ensure the safety of civilians, especially in areas frequented by local residents on a daily basis.

“ On Friday, March 29, 2024, at approximately 9:00 p.m., a landmine—remnant of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group—exploded in the Rumma area, Al-Zuhari village, Al-Mokha District, Taiz Governorate. The mine detonated as a group of seven individuals aged between 15 and 40, including two children, were traveling in a “Noah”-type minibus in route to the Yakhtul area to purchase an onion farm. While attempting to navigate around a pothole filled with stagnant water on a side road, the driver triggered the mine, causing the near-total destruction of the vehicle and injuries of varying severity among the passengers. Civilian people rushed the victims to the 2 December Hospital in Al-Mokha for first aid. Due to the severity of some of the injuries, several victims were later transferred to hospitals in Taiz City. Some of them continue to suffer the long-term effects of the traumatic incident. ”

26. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Al-Hawk district of Al Hudaydah governorate on February 25, 2024.

One of the survivors, a 40-year-old man, told Mwatana that the explosion occurred in an agricultural area on which local residents depend for their daily livelihoods. He said, “I had passed through the same road in my minibus the day before the incident without triggering any explosion. We had no idea the road was mined, and there were no warning signs. After the explosion, it turned out my injuries were the least severe, but the minibus—which was my family’s only source of income—was completely destroyed. I support a family of eight children, including seven girls. Losing the bus is a major disaster for us.”

He added, “Landmines are a calamity that will remain with us for decades. No party has investigated the incident, and no one has offered us any kind of support. We even had to cover all the medical and medication costs ourselves, despite our dire financial situation⁽²⁷⁾.”

■ On Monday, January 15, 2024, at around 10:30 a.m., a 23mm machine gun round—left behind as remnants of war—exploded in the Khubzan area, southeast of Al-Masloub District in Al-Jawf Governorate. The explosion occurred while an 11-year-old child was playing with the weapon’s remnants near his home. The blast resulted in the partial amputation of the child’s right thumb and index finger.

He was transported to the Al-Masloub Health Center for treatment. These remnants reportedly belong to the internationally recognized government forces that had been stationed in the area four years earlier⁽²⁸⁾.

The victim’s uncle described the moment as one of shock and paralysis, watching his nephew in agony and screaming. The child was transported on a motorcycle to the nearest medical facility, where he received treatment. Though he survived, he lost parts of his fingers.

This incident is a grim reminder of the persistent threat posed by the remnants of war, which continue to claim innocent victims. In Al-Masloub, life has become clouded by constant anxiety. Since the incident, fear has gripped every household in the area. Children can no longer play freely or safely herd sheep in the fields. The areas that once witnessed armed conflict remain dangerous, littered with landmines and unexploded ordnance left behind by war. ■■

27. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Al-Mokha district of Taiz governorate on March 31, 2024.

28. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Masloub district of Al-Jawf governorate on January 22, 2024.

“ On Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at approximately 11:00 a.m., an explosive device detonated in the Al-Yatmah market, located in the Al-Yatmah area of Khab wa Ash Sha’af District, Al-Jawf Governorate. A 15-year-old boy from Al Hudaydah Governorate was injured while collecting scrap metal when he came across remnants of an explosive weapon. He sustained multiple injuries across his body and was transported by a friend to the Al-Yatmah Health Center to receive medical treatment. Responsibility for the incident lies with the internationally recognized government forces, which had previously controlled the area⁽²⁹⁾ . ”

The victim’s cousin said, “We left Al Hudaydah in search of safety and livelihood in Khab wa Ash Sha’af, only to find ourselves trapped in deadly fields. Here, the remnants of war are not just painful memories—they are a daily threat lurking around every corner.”

He added, “My 15-year-old cousin collects scrap metal left behind by the withdrawing government forces. It’s dangerous work, but it’s our only source of income. On January 16, that livelihood turned into a nightmare. An explosive device detonated in his hand, and I stood helplessly, watching pain consume his body.”

He continued, “Thank God, his injuries were superficial, but the deeper wound is the fear that now grips our hearts. Every day, my cousin goes out to collect scrap, and I send him off with a trembling heart, afraid it might be the last time I see him.”

A local witness added, “Many people here find unexploded ordnance in abandoned military sites. They collect it to sell, unaware of the danger. These weapons are everywhere and can explode at the slightest touch. Khab wa Ash Sha’af is littered with remnants of war and landmines that pose a constant threat to children and women.”

These examples clearly illustrate the compounded tragedy civilians endure in areas contaminated with landmines, explosive remnants, and other hazardous remnants of war.

29. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Khab wa Ash Sha’af district of Al-Jawf governorate on March 7, 2024.



“

Landmines are a calamity that will remain with us for decades. No party has investigated the incident, and no one has offered us any kind of support.

”

Eighth: The Legal Framework on Landmines and Explosive Remnants

The use of anti-personnel landmines is prohibited under the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa Convention)⁽³⁰⁾, which obliges signatory parties to ban the use, production, stockpiling, transfer, and acquisition of anti-personnel landmines. Yemen is a party to this treaty, having ratified it in 1998; it entered into force in March 1999⁽³¹⁾.

IHL also prohibits the use of indiscriminate weapons that fail to distinguish between civilians and combatants. Landmines and explosive ordnance fall under this category due to their inability to discriminate, often resulting in significant harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure. The core principles of IHL impose an obligation to avoid causing unnecessary suffering—an obligation incompatible with the nature of landmines, which inflict prolonged suffering and long-term destruction, even after hostilities have ended.

Moreover, the use of landmines and other explosive ordnance is also prohibited under Article 7 of the Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)⁽³²⁾, which seeks to ban or restrict weapons deemed excessively injurious. The use of such weapons constitutes a grave violation of the rules and principles of international humanitarian law, further exacerbates civilian suffering, and hampers reconstruction and development efforts in conflict-affected areas.

Ninth: Live Ammunition

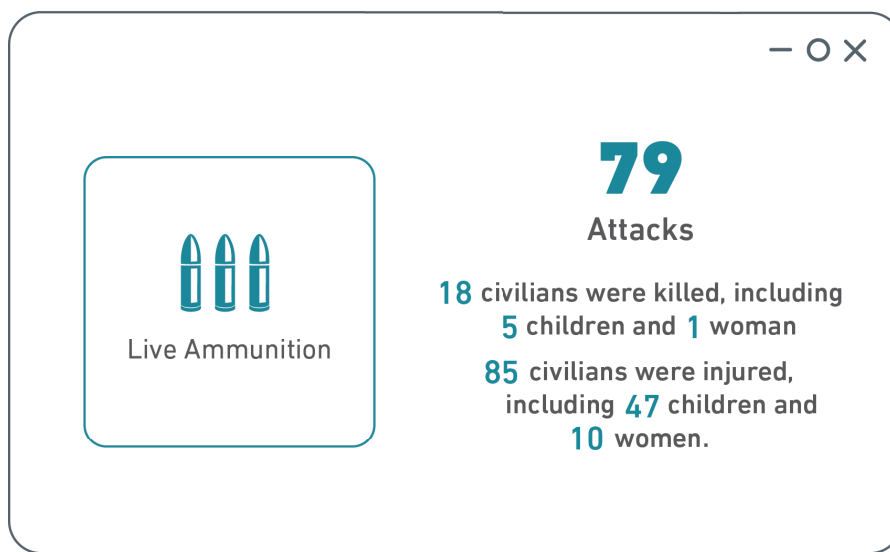
In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 79 incidents involving live ammunition, resulting in the deaths of 18 civilians—including 5 children and 1 woman—and injuries to 85 others, including 47 children and 10 women. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 38 of these incidents, during which 40 people were injured—including 25 children—and 6 people were killed, including 2 children.

30. The Ottawa Convention, available at the following link, <https://tinyurl.com/vsnr8jzw>.

31. Information found here : <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/en/membership/yemen>

32. The Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, available at the following link: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/ccw-amended-protocol-ii-1996/article-7?activeTab=>

The internationally recognized government was responsible for 17 incidents, which led to the injury of 15 people, including 7 children, and the killing of 5 others, including 1 child. The STC was responsible for 14 incidents, in which 12 people were injured—including 7 children—and 4 adults were killed. The Saudi/UAE-led coalition, particularly the Saudi Border Guards, was responsible for 8 incidents that resulted in 2 deaths and 10 injuries, including 6 children. The Joint Forces were responsible for 2 incidents that caused injuries to 8 individuals, including 2 children, and the death of 1 person.



These figures—covering both direct and ricocheted live fire—highlight the extent of violations faced by civilians amid the ongoing conflict and the suffering they endure. They also reveal the blatant disregard of the warring parties for civilian lives and their failure to meet any of their obligations under international humanitarian law.

Examples of Live Ammunition Incidents

“ On Thursday, April 4, 2024, at approximately 11:30 p.m., in the Al-Zahraa neighborhood of Salah District, east of Taiz Governorate, forces affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group stationed at the Central Security Hill—located about 150 meters from the incident site—opened direct fire using live ammunition. The attack resulted in the injury of a 7-year-old girl and a 21-year-old woman. The girl sustained a direct gunshot wound to her right foot, causing torn tendons, nerves, and blood vessels, in addition to fractures in the bones of her foot and toes. The woman was hit by a bullet that lodged in her right shoulder. Both victims were transported to Al-Thawra General Hospital in Taiz City, and later transferred to Al-Safwa Hospital to receive necessary treatment. Save the Children covered the cost of the girl’s medical care.

It is worth noting that the shooting lasted for about an hour in an area located between two military positions: one belonging to the internationally recognized government forces (Al-Zahraa site), located 100 meters away, and the other to the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group (Central Security Hill), about 150 meters away. The incident occurred while the victims were standing in front of their home after returning from evening Quran lessons held during Ramadan (from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.).

Importantly, there were no clashes taking place in the area at the time of the shooting, making this a clear violation of the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, which prohibit the direct targeting of civilians and obligate warring parties to take all necessary measures to protect them. ”

The child’s father, a 63-year-old, told Mwatana, “My daughter had been eagerly awaiting Eid, but instead she was shot in the leg. The ambulance had to evacuate her in the dark out of fear for safety. We are suffering greatly because of what happened and we are still in the hospital. I feel deep sorrow for my little girl.”

He added, “We live in an unstable area where clashes between the internationally recognized government forces and the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group erupt suddenly. There may be long periods without incident, and then fighting breaks

out again without warning. This forces us to constantly flee in search of safety—but there is no truly safe place. My daughter and my daughter-in-law are the greatest evidence of our suffering from this war. We sincerely hope that this war will end and that peace will return to our country⁽³³⁾.”

“ On the morning of Monday, August 26, 2024, at exactly 8:00 a.m., in the Ja’ar area of Khanfar District, Abyan Governorate, a member of the Security Belt Forces affiliated with the STC opened fire during a dispute that had erupted between Security Belt personnel and qat vendors in the area. Amid the escalating tension, the soldier fired two live rounds, one of which struck a 26-year-old man who was aboard a truck transporting laborers to nearby farms. The bullet entered behind his left ear and exited through the front left side of his head, causing him to collapse immediately at the scene. As bystanders gathered, the soldier fled without being apprehended by his fellow officers present at the scene.

The injured young man was transported on a motorcycle to Al-Razi General Hospital in Ja’ar, where he received first aid. He was later transferred by ambulance to the Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) hospital in Aden Governorate, and then to the Modern Arab Hospital in Al-Mansoura District, where he continues to receive treatment at his own expense. The perpetrator has not been arrested. ■■

A 32-year-old male eyewitness told Mwatana, “I was standing in the market on my motorcycle when I saw soldiers from the Security Belt Forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council. The altercation happened in the Al-Mahraq neighborhood of Ja’ar, when members of the Security Belt intervened in a dispute with two qat sellers. One of the soldiers angrily told them: ‘Leave the area now. You’re obstructing movement and creating congestion. You’re not licensed to sell here.’ He then ordered them to return to the main qat market designated for vendors. But the qat sellers flatly refused, and one of them snapped back: ‘We’re not leaving until we sell our qat.’

33. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Salah district of Taiz governorate on April 6, 2024.

The argument escalated, and tensions rose when one of the soldiers fired a warning shot into the air, followed by two additional rounds. The first shot thankfully hit no one, but the second struck the young man sitting in the big truck. The bullet pierced his head from behind his left ear and exited through the front of his skull. He collapsed right in front of us inside the vehicle, drenched in blood. I rushed to check on him—he was heavily bleeding, as everyone in the truck gathered around him⁽³⁴⁾.”

The closest friend of the victim rushed to provide aid in an attempt to save his life, but the treatment he required was costly. Unfortunately, the young man’s family had to bear substantial medical expenses, as the treatments were prohibitively expensive and their financial situation is extremely difficult. They have not received any support from the responsible authorities to date.

“ On the evening of Monday, June 17, 2024, at approximately 6:45 p.m., in Aden Governorate—specifically in the Dar Saad District, in the Musabain area—a firefight broke out between members of the Dar Saad Al-Khabt Police and personnel from the Al-Memdara Police, both affiliated with the STC. The clash was sparked by a dispute over guarding a plot of land. As a result of the exchange, a woman in her sixties—a displaced person from Al Hudaydah Governorate—was killed by a stray bullet⁽³⁵⁾. ”

“ On Friday, January 19, 2024, at around 11:00 a.m., in the Wadi Al-Asfal Al-Jabana area, Razih District, Sa’dah Governorate, Saudi border guards opened heavy fire on a group of Somali migrants who were attempting to cross the border into Saudi Arabia in search of work. Some of the migrants were carrying qat. The gunfire injured two people, one of whom was a child. No clashes were occurring at the time of the incident. The victims were a 17-year-old Somali boy who was shot in the left leg below the knee, and a 23-year-old Yemeni man who was shot in the right shoulder. They were rescued by a driver who transports qat from Sa’dah to the border districts. He took them to the Talh Rural Hospital in Sahar District, where they received treatment for three days following the incident. ”

34. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Khanfar district of Abyan governorate on September 4, 2024.

35. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Dar Saad district of Aden governorate on July 14, 2024.



“

Why are you terrorizing us? Why are you raiding our homes and scaring our children? Don't we deserve respect?

”

The rescuer, a 34-year-old man, told Mwatana, “I was at the Wadi Al-Asfal market, below the Al-Jabana area near the Saudi border—a location used to gather qat and tobacco before smuggling them across the border. While I was there, I heard heavy gunfire from automatic weapons and mounted machine guns coming from the direction of the Saudi watchtowers and military posts, which were about 200–400 meters from where I was standing. The fire was aimed at a group of Somalis attempting to cross the border. Less than half an hour after the shooting, two injured individuals were brought to the market, and those with them called for help. I volunteered to transport them and used my pickup truck to carry them in the bed. Among the injured was a child working to support his family, who live in extremely harsh conditions. He had planned to enter Saudi Arabia in search of work after seeing his older brother working as a porter for a local trader in the market⁽³⁶⁾.”

The rescuer recounted with sorrow the desperate circumstances that drive children and youth to face dangers beyond their capacity. He emphasized how dire need forces them into such perilous undertakings in search of a dignified livelihood. He described these individuals not as reckless or greedy, but as victims of severe hardship—fully aware of the risks that might ultimately cost them their lives.

“ On Saturday, March 2, 2024, at approximately 8:00 a.m., forces affiliated with the 2nd Infantry Brigade of the government forces opened fire at a newly established checkpoint in the village of Wadi Matar, in Al-Dhale’ District. A civilian male, 27 years old, was shot in the right shoulder, resulting in a bone fracture. He was transferred to Sanah Hospital in Al-Dhale’. The forces had set up the checkpoint in search of a wanted individual, and when the victim and his brother approached the soldiers on a motorcycle and asked about the purpose of the checkpoint, the soldiers responded with direct gunfire⁽³⁷⁾ . ”

The victim said, “I was surprised to see a checkpoint in our village, so I asked them, ‘Why are you terrorizing us? Why are you raiding our homes and scaring our children? Don’t we deserve respect?’”

He paused, then continued in a low voice, “They didn’t give me a chance. They responded with bullets right away. I felt a sting in my shoulder, then a burning pain in my side. I collapsed to the ground, bleeding.”

36. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Razih district of Sa’dah governorate on February 17, 2024.

37. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Dale’ district of Al-Dale’ governorate on March 8, 2024.

He added, “The villagers carried me to the field hospital, where I underwent surgery. However, I couldn’t stay. Fear was stronger than the pain. I was afraid they’d arrest me while I was wounded—imprison me just for daring to speak up.”

A relative of the victim also stated, “A military unit fired on my relative at point-blank range, hitting him in the shoulder and side. I couldn’t believe they did that just because he demanded our right to security!”

Tenth: The Legal Framework on the Use of Live Ammunition

The use of live ammunition is subject to strict regulations under the international legal framework governing the use of force and firearms, which aims to strike a balance between the protection of life and the respect for human rights. International treaties clearly define the contexts in which live ammunition may be used, emphasizing that its use must be strictly guided by the principles of necessity and proportionality, in full compliance with IHL.

Live ammunition must be regarded as a measure of last resort in the context of law enforcement and emergency situations. The Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms adopted by the United Nations in 1990⁽³⁸⁾ affirm that live ammunition may only be used as a last resort, and only when it is absolutely necessary to protect life from an imminent threat. Its use must also be proportionate to the level of threat posed, and only after all less lethal means have been exhausted.

In situations of armed conflict, Additional Protocol I to the 1977 Geneva Conventions stipulates the principle of distinction⁽³⁹⁾, which requires that attacks be directed solely at legitimate military targets. All necessary measures must be taken to avoid harming civilians or civilian objects. This principle reinforces that live ammunition may only be used for a clear and legitimate military purpose, and must not cause disproportionate collateral damage.

38. Available at the following link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/basic-principles-use-force-and-firearms-law-enforcement#:~:text=Law%20enforcement%20officials%20shall%20not,a%20danger%20and%20resisting%20their>

39. Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, available at the following link: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ar/ihl-treaties/api-1977?activeTab=>

In areas experiencing armed conflict or heightened security tensions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)⁽⁴⁰⁾ states that the use of firearms by law enforcement authorities must adhere to the core standards set out in both international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The guidance stresses that lethal force may be used only when it is necessary and unmistakably proportionate to the legitimate objective of protecting life.

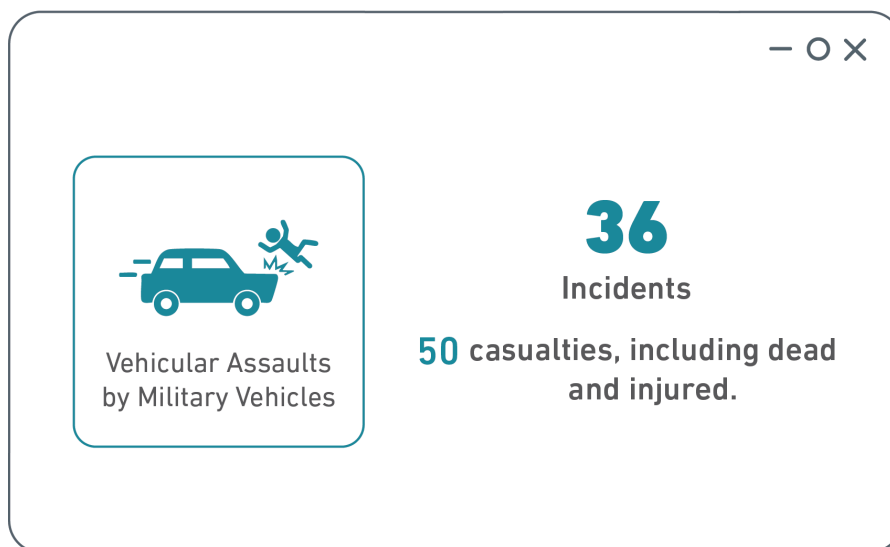
These principles embody a universal commitment to ensuring that the use of lethal force remains an exceptional measure, governed by strict legal safeguards designed to protect human life—whether in civil emergency contexts or armed conflict. Any deviation from these standards constitutes a grave violation of international law and obligates responsible authorities to be held accountable in accordance with international norms and legal standards.

40. Available at the following link:

<https://www.ohchr.org/ar/law-enforcement/about-law-enforcement-and-human-rights>

Eleventh: Vehicular Assaults by Military Vehicles

Throughout 2024, incidents of vehicular assaults involving military vehicles continued in Yemen, with Mwatana documenting 36 incidents resulting in 50 civilian casualties, including both deaths and injuries. These incidents reflect the ongoing deterioration of the security situation and were often the result of reckless driving at high speeds and disregard for traffic regulations using authorized military vehicles. Despite the varying affiliations of the perpetrators, civilians—including children—were the primary victims of these violations, which were carried out with blatant disregard for international humanitarian law and human rights standards.



The STC was responsible for 14 of these incidents, which resulted in 18 civilian casualties, including 16 injuries—13 of whom were children—and two deaths. The internationally recognized government was responsible for 12 incidents that led to the injury of 12 civilians, including 8 children, and the death of one civilian. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 4 incidents, which resulted in 12 civilian injuries, including 9 children, and one civilian death. The Joint Forces on the western coast were responsible for 6 incidents that led to the injury of 5 civilians, including two children, and one civilian death.

These violations reveal a disturbing pattern of indirect targeting of civilians due to recklessness and disregard in the operation of military vehicles. Children were the most affected by these incidents, highlighting the varied patterns of violations endured by civilians amid the armed conflict in Yemen. As these abuses continue, there is an urgent need for meaningful steps toward accountability and justice.

Examples of Vehicular Assaults by Military Vehicles

“ On Thursday, May 16, 2024, at approximately 10:10 a.m., a tragic vehicular assault took place in Al-Anad Market, located in Tuban District, Lahj Governorate.

The incident resulted in the injury of a child, Moayad Mohammed (pseudonym – male, 15 years old), as he was crossing the main road on his way to buy a toy for his cousin. He was struck by a beige military vehicle carrying four personnel dressed in the uniform of the Fourth Brigade – Homeland Shield, affiliated with the internationally recognized government.

The accident caused a fracture in the upper part of the child’s left leg, just above the ankle joint. Members of the military vehicle transported the child to Ibn Khaldun General Hospital, where he received first aid. Medical examinations revealed that he required surgery to insert screws in the leg to stabilize the fracture. In an apparent attempt to reassure the child’s family, the driver contacted the boy’s father and promised to cover all medical expenses. However, upon the father’s arrival at the hospital, he was shocked to find the driver gone, and repeated attempts to reach him failed as his phone was switched off. As a result, the child was left waiting for the necessary surgery without any follow-up or support from the driver or responsible authorities. ”

The child’s father (38 years old) told Mwatana, “On the day of the incident, I received a call on my mobile from an unknown number. When I answered, the caller asked, ‘Are you Moayad’s father?’ My heart sank, and I was overcome with fear, but I managed to compose myself and answered, ‘Yes, who is speaking?’ He replied, ‘Your son, Moayad Mohammed –pseudonym – has been in a traffic accident, and we are now at Ibn Khaldun General Hospital.’

I hung up quickly and rushed to the hospital. I arrived at about 1:30 p.m. and found my son Moayad in the orthopedics department with his left leg in a cast. I hugged him tightly and asked what had happened. He recounted the details of the accident.

My son said that around ten that morning, he had been walking along the main road near Al-Anad Market in Tuban District, Lahj Governorate. As he was crossing the street, a military vehicle suddenly hit him and knocked him to the ground. He tried to stand up but couldn't, collapsing again.

He added that the beige military vehicle stopped next to him, and four soldiers wearing beige camouflage uniforms with brown patches got out. He said they were members of the Fourth Brigade – Homeland Shield. They lifted him onto the back of the military vehicle and took him to Ibn Khaldun General Hospital, where he received emergency care.

X-rays showed a fracture in the upper bone of his left leg. His leg was cast, and he remained in the hospital for a full day before I took him home. But since that day, Moayad has been unable to resume a normal life.”

He continued, “My son still needs monthly checkups to monitor his condition. The doctors told us he may need surgery to insert screws at the fracture site if the bone doesn't heal naturally. Unfortunately, my limited financial resources make it impossible to cover the cost of treatment or the potential operation.

Moayad was a talented football player and had previously won the top scorer award during competitions in Aden Governorate. He dreamed of becoming a famous footballer, but this incident shattered his dream and left us worried about whether his leg will ever fully heal or if he'll be left with a permanent disability that prevents him from pursuing his passion⁽⁴¹⁾.”

41. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Tuban district of Lahj governorate on September 7, 2024.



“

Despite the immense pain caused by this tragedy, we didn't dare demand anything from those responsible.

”

“ On Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 8:00 p.m., along the ring road in Ja'ar, Khanfar District, Abyan Governorate, a 14-year-old boy was struck by a military supply truck transporting food to the training camp in Habeel al-Barq, affiliated with the Giants Forces of the STC. The boy was crossing the road on his motorbike when the incident occurred. The truck driver immediately transported him to Al-Razi General Hospital in Abyan. Tragically, the boy died en route due to severe injuries, including skull fractures, broken legs and arms, and multiple injuries across his body. ”

The boy had been displaced from Al Hudaydah since 2016 and worked alongside his father collecting scrap materials. He used the motorbike to travel between home and his father's workplace. His brother (23 years old) told Mwatana, “We learned of the incident from the very people who ran over my brother, Mohammed Mohsen (alias – 14 years old). A witness who happened to be passing by on the asphalt road along the Ja'ar ring road confirmed to us that the military truck was speeding recklessly through a vital and crowded area. My brother was trying to cross the road on his motorbike to the other side—but fate had other plans. The military vehicle struck him in a horrific manner, leaving him in pieces. Although he still had a faint pulse after the accident, his injuries were fatal. The truck stopped immediately, and the soldiers rushed to take him to the hospital, but sadly, he passed away on the way.”

He added, “Despite the immense pain caused by this tragedy, we didn't dare demand anything from those responsible. They offered their apologies to both my father and me. My father didn't want anything from them. A few days after the incident, a representative from the camp commander came to inform us that they were willing to pay blood money, but my father refused to accept any compensation.

My brother was the fourth among our male siblings. We are displaced from Al Hudaydah, working in scrap collection, with no ties to any military groups. We always try to avoid trouble. Due to our difficult circumstances, my brother dropped out of school at an early age to work and earn a living. Even the motorbike he used for work was completely destroyed in the incident. It was crushed under the truck, and he sustained injuries so severe that they ended his life instantly.

This tragedy has left a deep wound in our hearts—one that will never heal. It reminded us of how fragile life is and underscored the urgent need for strict measures to curb reckless speeding, especially on roads that are teeming with daily traffic⁽⁴²⁾.”

“ On the evening of Wednesday, June 19, 2024, a tragic incident took place at the Bin Laden Tourist Park, located in the Haratha Mountain area of Al-Dhihar District, Ibb Governorate. The park was crowded with hundreds of families who had gathered to celebrate the Eid al-Adha holiday, when an armed man affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group stormed the site driving a military vehicle.

The armed man arrived at the park and began performing dangerous stunts, commonly known as “drifting.” During his reckless display, his vehicle struck a parked car on a slope, causing it to slide into five other parked vehicles, which in turn were propelled toward crowds of civilians, sparking chaos and widespread panic. The incident resulted in injuries to eight people, including a child and five women, with injuries ranging from moderate to severe.

The victims were transported by a Red Crescent ambulance that happened to be at the park. They were taken to Al-Manar Hospital, where they received initial medical treatment. Thanks to the intervention of a charitable individual, the costs of initial treatment for most of the victims were covered, and they were discharged within hours. However, two women remained hospitalized due to the need for surgical operations, which they could not afford. Their families ultimately bore the cost of the surgeries⁽⁴³⁾.

The armed member of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group who caused the incident did not offer any assistance and left the scene without regard for the injuries and damage he had caused. It is reported that he is affiliated with a supervisor of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group in the Ba’dan District. ■■

Most of the documented incidents are the result of excessive speed and recklessness, which represent a form of excessive use of force. Adherence to traffic rules, holding perpetrators accountable, and enforcing restrictions can help reduce such violations and the suffering they cause.

42. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Khanfar district of Abyan governorate on September 9, 2024.

43. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Dhahir district of Ibb governorate on July 13, 2024.

Twelfth: Legal Framework Governing Incidents of Vehicular Assault by Military Vehicles

Incidents of vehicular assault by military vehicles fall under multiple international laws and conventions encompassed within IHL and International Human Rights Law (IHRL). These violations include killings and physical harm caused by reckless driving or the deliberate use of military vehicles against civilians.

Such violations constitute grave breaches of IHL and IHRL, particularly when civilians are targeted or subjected to bodily harm. The right to life is a fundamental human right enshrined in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)⁽⁴⁴⁾, which obligates states to protect this right and prohibits arbitrary deprivation of life.

Moreover, some of these acts may be classified as war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court⁽⁴⁵⁾—especially when they involve the deliberate targeting of civilians, or are carried out indiscriminately or disproportionately, including during non-international armed conflicts.

Therefore, the use of military vehicles to run over civilians constitutes a flagrant violation of international laws and conventions and necessitates legal accountability and justice.

Thirteenth: Enforced Disappearance

In 2024, Mwatana Organization documented no fewer than 131 incidents of enforced disappearance, affecting at least 177 civilians, including at least 18 children and 9 women. Responsibility for these incidents is distributed as follows:

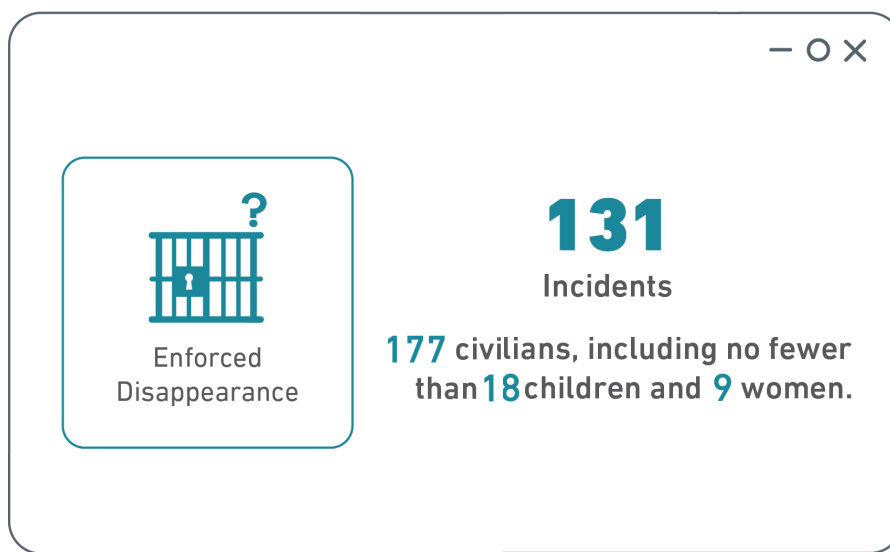
- The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group is responsible for 56 incidents, involving 65 victims, including 6 children.
- The Southern Transitional Council (STC) is responsible for 36 incidents, with 42 victims, including 2 children.

44. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

45. Rome Statute, available at the following link: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/es/ihl-treaties/icc-statute-1998/article-7?activeTab=default>

— Bloody Gambles —

- The internationally recognized government is responsible for 29 incidents, resulting in 41 victims, including 5 children.
- The Joint Forces on the western coast are responsible for 4 incidents, with 8 victims.
- The Eritrean forces committed 3 incidents, with 17 victims, including 4 children.
- The Saudi/UAE-led coalition is responsible for 3 incidents, resulting in 4 victims.



Between May 31 and June 7, 2024, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group launched a campaign during which it detained staff members—both men and women—working with local and international humanitarian organizations, as well as current and former employees of foreign diplomatic missions. Throughout the second half of 2024, the group continued to hold these individuals in conditions of enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention, which led to the withdrawal of several international organizations from Yemen.

Victims of enforced disappearance in Yemen endure horrific abuse and serious violations while being held in harsh and degrading conditions in secret detention facilities. The crime of enforced disappearance starkly reflects the absence of accountability and lack of remedies, encouraging parties to the conflict to continue perpetrating such violations and crimes with impunity.

Although enforced disappearance constitutes a grave breach of IHL—and may rise to the level of a war crime—its catastrophic impact extends beyond the direct victims to include their families, friends, and society at large, deepening the suffering and amplifying the negative consequences of this violation on both individuals and communities.

Examples of Enforced Disappearance Incidents

“ On Sunday, June 9, 2024, at approximately 3:00 p.m., an armed group comprising 2 to 3 vehicles carrying masked, armed men affiliated with the Security and Intelligence Service in Sana’a, under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, arrested a 39-year-old man who was employed by a foreign embassy. The arrest took place in the Al-Sabeen District in Amanat Al-Asimah, Sana’a. The victim was detained without any formal charges or legal justification and was taken to an unknown location. His family was not informed of his whereabouts or the charges against him and was denied any form of visitation or communication with him. He was deprived of all his guaranteed rights, including the right to legal defense. ”

The victim’s 33-year-old sister told Mwatana, “My brother, Abdullah Qader (an alias – 39 years old/male), had been working at a foreign embassy in Yemen since the beginning of the war. The embassy’s staff eventually left, and the embassy closed its doors. During all that time, my brother was never questioned, especially since the country the embassy represents is not a party to the conflict in Yemen.

On June 9, 2024, an armed military group came to our home and detained my brother for three hours in front of his children. They searched the entire house without offering any justification or explanation. They wanted to handcuff him in front of his child, but he refused to let them do it in front of his young son. We were told he would be released in three days, but he hasn’t returned since, and we have no information about his whereabouts or condition.

Shortly afterward, a journalist abroad published my brother’s name and photo without our permission, which only deepened our suffering. The most painful part has been watching his 9-year-old son experience recurring nightmares because of his father’s disappearance. We had to take him to a psychologist to help him cope with the trauma.

As for my parents, they are in a very bad emotional state. Our days have become dark—we live in constant anxiety, hoping for any news about his fate, or even just to know what he's accused of and to be allowed to see him⁽⁴⁶⁾."

“ On Thursday, June 6, 2024, at around 7:00 a.m., a group of ten armed and masked men wearing military uniforms—belonging to the Ansar Allah (Houthi) Security and Intelligence Service—detained a 52-year-old man who worked for an international organization. The incident took place in the Al-Sabeen District in Amanat Al-Asimah, Sana'a. The victim was taken to an undisclosed location without any formal charges or legal basis for his arrest. Since then, neither his family nor any other party has been able to determine his fate or whereabouts. He remains forcibly disappeared as of the date this report was written. ”

The victim's 44-year-old wife told Mwatana, “My husband—52 years old—worked with several international organizations. At the time of his detention, he was unemployed, and we were busy preparing for our youngest daughter's wedding.

On the morning of Thursday, June 6, 2024—after a long and exhausting night celebrating the wedding—an armed group stormed our house in Al-Sabeen District.

I was exhausted and suffering from severe bleeding due to a uterine tumor. When I woke up, I found armed women ordering me to go with them. They took me to my mother-in-law's room where I was held while they began violently searching the house, smashing furniture, breaking doors, and scattering everything in the rooms.

I was terrified and in shock—especially when they denied me and my mother-in-law access to the bathroom despite my critical medical condition. Later, they confiscated our phones, computers, and even the savings my husband had set aside for my surgery. Yet they insisted that ‘they are not thieves.’ But they took everything that mattered to us.

After they left, my husband disappeared with them. We haven't heard his voice since. We kept calling and were repeatedly told he would be released ‘soon.’

46. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Mwatana's head office in Amanat Al-Asimah on July 17, 2024.

My husband remains forcibly disappeared. The impact on our family has been immense. My son suffers from nightmares, my elderly mother-in-law cries daily, and our daughter is struggling to complete her graduation project after they took her laptop.

I'm still in shock. I keep asking myself: What did we do to deserve this? Why are we living through this nightmare that seems to have no end?⁽⁴⁷⁾"

“ On Tuesday, June 4, 2024, the victim, a 28-year-old man, suddenly disappeared while in one of the streets of Marib city, which is under the control of the internationally recognized Yemeni government. His family searched for him throughout the city, until a police guard informed them that he was being held at the Political Security prison. Since that day, the family has not been allowed to visit or communicate with him in any way. His last contact with them was at 10:00 a.m. on the morning of his disappearance⁽⁴⁸⁾. ”

The victim is a civilian working as a sales representative, traveling between different governorates. His family lives in a state of constant confusion and worry, questioning the reason behind his disappearance. They are also suffering from harsh living conditions, as he is the sole breadwinner. The family, based in Aden governorate, struggles to be physically present in Marib to follow up on his case, which further compounds their psychological and financial distress.

“ On the morning of Saturday, February 24, 2024, at approximately 7:30 a.m., the Eritrean navy abducted four Yemeni fishermen—including a minor aged 16—while they were fishing in international territorial waters. The victims, whose ages ranged from 16 to 36, were forcibly taken to a military camp belonging to the Eritrean navy on Terma Island, Eritrea. There, they were subjected to forced labor and made to perform hard labor for 14 days, in blatant violation of international standards that prohibit exploitation and forced labor.

47. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Sabeen district, Amanat Al-Asimah, on July 9, 2024.

48. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Marib city, Marib governorate, on August 14, 2024.

The victims were only released after an intervention by a merchant from the city of Mokha, who paid a ransom of no less than USD 5,000 to secure their release. Additionally, the Eritrean navy confiscated the victims' fishing boat along with its contents, including fish and fishing equipment, depriving them of their only source of livelihood and inflicting significant losses upon them⁽⁴⁹⁾. ■■

The fishermen were taken to a camp on Eritrea's Terma Island, where they were forced to perform arduous tasks under inhumane and harsh conditions. During the 14-day detention, the victims endured hunger and abuse. They were provided with insufficient and unhealthy meals and compelled to carry out heavy labor, such as transporting fuel and constructing facilities within the camp. Some were subjected to physical assault and verbal abuse, including being pelted with stones and beaten merely for expressing exhaustion. They were denied contact with their families and access to any form of medical care, despite one of the abductees suffering from a heart condition.

The detention facility lacked basic amenities, such as toilets, and the victims were prevented from bathing for several days. After two weeks in captivity, the fishermen were released through the mediation of a merchant from Mokha.

■ On Friday, February 16, 2024, at approximately 10:00 p.m. in Dar Saad District, Aden Governorate, a security force affiliated with the Security Belt forces of the STC detained a 30-year-old civilian and subjected him to enforced disappearance.

The incident took place near the Dar Saad post office and involved a small van (type: Foxy) and two military Land Cruiser vehicles (brown with black dots). Approximately 15 masked men wearing black face coverings and carrying light weapons (Kalashnikovs) were aboard these vehicles.

Since then, the civilian has disappeared without a trace. His family, accompanied by a Mwatana lawyer, made extensive efforts to locate him by visiting all detention centers and prisons across Aden city, but were met with denials from all security agencies regarding his presence. His enforced disappearance continued without any information on his fate until December 2024, leaving his family in ongoing anxiety and suffering. ■■

49. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Mokha city, Taiz governorate, on April 1, 2024.

“

The detention facility lacked basic amenities, such as toilets, and the victims were prevented from bathing for several days.

”

The victim's 48-year-old mother recounted her ordeal to Mwatana, saying, "Young men in the neighborhood told me that my son was arrested when a force arrived in a Foxy van and two military vehicles near the Dar Saad post office. The soldiers spread out across the area. Some of them seized my son, dragged him forcefully, blindfolded him with a piece of cloth, and took him to an unknown location.

I know nothing about my son's whereabouts, the conditions of his detention, the food he eats, or how he is treated. All I know is that I've become ill from constant worry and crying over my son, whose fate remains unknown.

I appealed to Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, President of the Southern Transitional Council, to intervene and reveal my son's fate and release him, as he is innocent of the charge leveled against him—being involved in a Hilux car bombing that killed the son of a Southern Transitional Council leader.

I know no details, nor where my son is, but I will keep searching until I find answers." I heard that the force that arrested him was under the command of the Security Belt leader, Al-Nasr. I went to the Security Belt camp and inquired about my son, but they denied holding him. I knocked on many doors, searched everywhere, but all authorities denied he was in their custody.

I know nothing about my son's whereabouts, the conditions of his detention, the food he eats, or how he is treated. All I know is that I've become ill from constant worry and crying over my son, whose fate remains unknown.

I appealed to Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, President of the Southern Transitional Council, to intervene and reveal my son's fate and release him, as he is innocent of the charge leveled against him—being involved in a Hilux car bombing that killed the son of a Southern Transitional Council leader.

I know no details, nor where my son is, but I will keep searching until I find answers⁽⁵⁰⁾."

50. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Dar Saad district of Aden governorate on June 2, 2024.

Fourteenth: The Legal Framework Governing Enforced Disappearance

Enforced disappearance is defined as the arrest, detention, abduction, or any other form of deprivation of liberty carried out by state officials or by persons or groups acting with the authorization, support, or acquiescence of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or the concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, thereby placing them outside the protection of the law⁽⁵¹⁾.

Victims of enforced disappearance are individuals who have effectively vanished after being apprehended by state authorities or by persons acting with the state's consent, after which their whereabouts or fate are denied. Enforced disappearance, whether committed by state authorities or armed groups, constitutes a grave crime under international law.

Families and friends of those who are forcibly disappeared live in a state of confusion, fear, and constant anxiety regarding the victim's fate—whether they are still alive, whether they are being tortured, whether they have sufficient food and water—and face many unanswered questions regarding the victim's condition, the circumstances of their detention, and the charges brought against them. These concerns often lead to long-term psychological trauma that does not end even if the victim is returned or their fate is revealed.

Both IHL and IHRL criminalize enforced disappearance and recommend the imposition of the harshest penalties on all those involved in such violations. Enforced disappearance is one of the crimes for which prohibitive legal provisions remain in effect under all circumstances, without exception.

The criminalization of enforced disappearance stems from the fact that it deprives victims of their right to legal protection, their right to defense, to a fair trial, and to communicate with their families. Victims of enforced disappearance are often subjected to torture and other forms of inhuman treatment, as well as cruel and degrading punishment.

51. The definition of enforced disappearance, International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/223ws89n>.

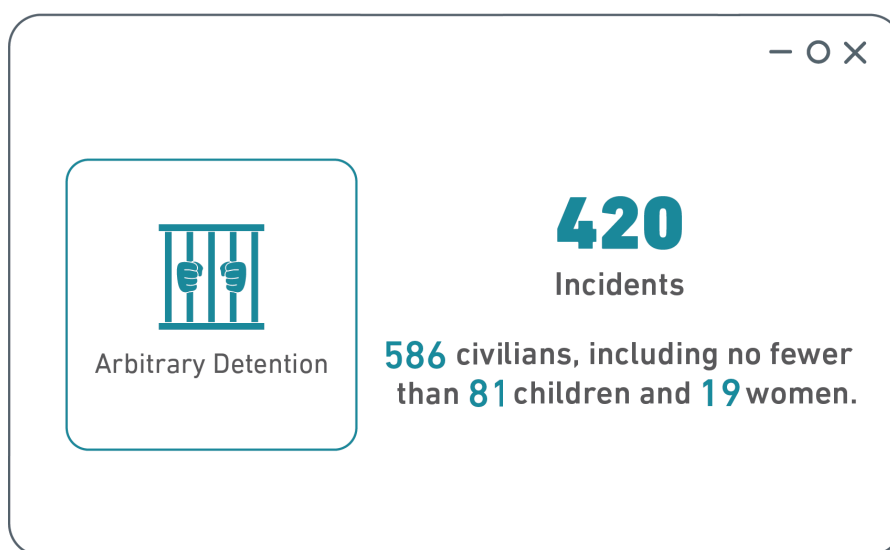
Although Yemen has not ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and does not have explicit provisions in its national laws criminalizing the practice, laws related to arbitrary detention and the prohibition of torture are consistent with international provisions in criminalizing the practice of enforced disappearance.

According to the Rome Statute, the systematic practice of enforced disappearance constitutes a crime against humanity. Furthermore, detention, threats of detention, or hostage-taking with the aim of compelling a third party to take or abstain from a particular action is considered a war crime—highlighting the seriousness of such violations in the context of armed conflict.

Fifteenth: Arbitrary Detention

In 2024, the scale and severity of arbitrary detention violations rose alarmingly across various regions of the Republic of Yemen. Mwatana for Human Rights, through its field team of lawyers and researchers, documented at least 420 incidents of arbitrary detention affecting no fewer than 586 individuals, including at least 81 children and 19 women.

The statistics show that responsibility for these violations is distributed among several warring parties, with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group bearing the greatest responsibility. The group committed 217 incidents of arbitrary detention affecting 302 individuals, including 51 children.



The internationally recognized government is responsible for 96 incidents of arbitrary detention involving 129 individuals, including 14 children, while Southern Transitional Council (STC) forces are responsible for 90 incidents affecting 109 individuals, among them 10 children. The Joint Forces committed 9 incidents of arbitrary detention targeting 13 individuals, including one child. Lastly, Eritrean forces were responsible for 4 incidents involving 27 individuals, including 5 children.

These findings point to a serious escalation in human rights violations in Yemen, particularly regarding deprivation of liberty, freedom of opinion, peaceful assembly, and other fundamental freedoms—rights protected under both national legislation and international law.

The conditions of arbitrary detention in Yemen—whether in official or unofficial detention sites—are of grave concern due to the widespread human rights abuses associated with them. Even in official detention facilities, conditions are often inhumane, lacking basic safety and health standards, placing detainees in appalling situations that threaten their dignity and physical and psychological well-being.

Unofficial detention sites are of even greater concern due to their secretive nature and lack of oversight by independent bodies or families. In these locations, opportunities for monitoring by human rights organizations or family visits are virtually non-existent or entirely unavailable, creating an environment conducive to further violations such as torture and cruel, inhuman treatment—and reinforcing a culture of impunity.

Examples of Arbitrary Detention Incidents

“ On Tuesday, July 2, 2024, at approximately 11:00 a.m., the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group arbitrarily detained a 50-year-old civilian who works as a teacher. He was detained from a passenger bus on a public road in the Tartour Al-Asfal area, Al-Qa'idah city, Dhi al-Sufal District, Ibb Governorate. He was stopped by members of the Rescue Police at a checkpoint and then taken to the Security Department of Dhi al-Sufal District in Al-Qa'idah city, on the pretext of being suspected of affiliation with the internationally recognized government forces, merely because he was traveling from Taiz Governorate.

The victim remained in arbitrary detention at the Dhi al-Sufal Security Department without any clear charge or fair trial until October 18, 2024, when he was released.

This incident represents a flagrant violation of fundamental rights guaranteed under both national and international law.

It is worth noting that Mohammed (a pseudonym – 50 years old, male) was traveling from Taiz Governorate to Sana'a Governorate to visit his ill sister who resides there. This incident constitutes a violation of his right to personal liberty and the legal procedures stipulated in the Yemeni Constitution and international laws prohibiting arbitrary detention. ■■

The victim's wife (38 years old) told Mwatana that her husband's mobile phone was confiscated on the same day he was transferred to the Dhi al-Sufal Security Department in Ibb Governorate. She added that she received a phone call from him using a soldier's phone at the security department, during which he informed her of what had happened to him. He told her that the place where he was being held was unsanitary, and that he had not received any food since his arrival at the detention center—instead, he shared meals with other detainees. He also noted that the facility lacked adequate ventilation.

The wife explained that her husband was not interrogated immediately upon detention. Instead, he was questioned five days after his arrest, and the interrogation was conducted verbally, only once, without any written documentation. She said he was not subjected to abuse or threats, and that the investigators' questions were limited to inquiries about his profession, whether he worked with government forces, and his reasons for traveling from Taiz to Ibb. At the end of the call, he asked her to contact a lawyer to follow up on his case.

The wife stated that she was unable to visit her husband in prison because she was still in Taiz Governorate, which added to her hardship.

She further explained that her husband's detention had a profound negative impact on her, their children, and the entire family. She emphasized that her husband was an educational professional with no affiliation to any party, was a civilian, and had never been part of any military entity. She added that he had not left Taiz since the beginning of the war due to road closures and only decided to travel after hearing that the Al-Qasr Roundabout crossing had reopened, intending solely to visit his sick sister, whom he had not seen since the start of the war.



“

The voice that unsettled the corrupt
was silenced behind bars.

”

Despite that, he was detained without justification, leaving a deep psychological impact on the family. She concluded by saying that the family suffered greatly due to his absence, which was based on a fabricated accusation, without a fair trial or legal safeguards⁽⁵²⁾.

“ On Sunday, October 6, 2024, at around 10:00 a.m. on Al-Shabat Roundabout Street in Khur Maksar District, Aden Governorate, an incident of arbitrary detention occurred. The Security Department of Khur Maksar, affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council, arrested a 36-year-old male journalist. The victim responded to a summons from the Khur Maksar security authorities, only to find himself imprisoned. He was lured under the pretext of a “compulsory order” and thrown into an overcrowded cell, where he was denied access to vital medication for depression and hypertension. After three days of distress, he underwent an exhausting nighttime interrogation—without physical torture, but under a strong sense of injustice. He was released on bail, but the charge remained: “incitement,” based on an allegation dating back four years by a member of the Presidential Leadership Council, Faraj Al-Bahsani, who claimed the victim had published content inciting against him⁽⁵³⁾. ”

A friend of the victim stated, “I knew my friend as a journalist and a principled person. In Hadhramaut, his voice resonated with truth, exposing corruption and highlighting wrongdoings. But his words angered the authorities, and they tightened the noose around him. In search of a safe haven, my friend relocated to Aden. Yet the past caught up with him. After four years, he was summoned by security and imprisoned on an old charge. The voice that unsettled the corrupt was silenced behind bars.”

“ On the evening of Thursday, October 26, 2024, at approximately 9:00 p.m., forces affiliated with the Ministry of Interior of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group arbitrarily detained five civilians between the ages of 15 and 20 in the Rimass Roundabout area, Al-Sabeen District, Amanat Al-Asimah, Sana’a. A large group of approximately 70 individuals participated in the detention operation—20 in civilian clothing and 50 in military uniforms, many of whom were masked. They moved

52. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team on July 13, 2024.

53. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Khur Maksar district of Aden governorate on November 17, 2024.

using seven gray military vehicles, while some members proceeded on foot. The mobile phone and vehicle of one of the victims, a child, were confiscated before all five were taken to Suhail Police Station in Amanat Al-Asimah. Despite being held, no formal charges were presented, nor was any legal justification given for their arrest. ■■

One of the victims, Muhannad Aziz (a pseudonym), aged 15, told Mwatana, “I was in the car with my friends, celebrating the anniversary of the September 26 Revolution. We were holding the Yemeni national flag out the car window. When we reached Rimass Roundabout, a group of forces surrounded us—some in military uniforms, others in civilian clothing.

They were carrying sticks painted in the colors of the same flag (the Yemeni flag). A physical altercation broke out between us and the soldiers. We were then forced into a military vehicle and taken to Suhail Police Station. Upon arrival, we were searched and placed in a cramped room containing about 100 people, most of them aged 15 or 16. We weren’t given any food until the following day.

The room was very small and unsuitable for sleeping due to overcrowding. Around midnight, I was called in for questioning. They asked for my name, family address, and occupation. I wasn’t threatened or beaten, but I was forced to fingerprint a paper I wasn’t allowed to read. Then I was returned to the room.

I heard from some detainees that those who are called in for interrogation and don’t return are transferred to intelligence department. I was scared throughout my detention and didn’t understand why I had been arrested—just for carrying my country’s flag. Has that become a crime? I was released two days later after my family came and signed a pledge that I would not participate in celebrations again⁽⁵⁴⁾.”

This testimony highlights the severe violations suffered by civilians, including children—chief among them arbitrary detention—under inhumane detention conditions that fall far short of basic standards of human dignity.

54. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team at Mwatana’s head office in Amanat Al-Asimah on October 12, 2024.

“ On the morning of Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at approximately 9:00 a.m., a military unit consisting of a military vehicle carrying the local supervisor and seven armed men— all affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group—raided a bookstore located on the ring road in the market of Raydah District, ‘Amran Governorate. They detained a 25-year-old civilian and took him to the detention center of the Raydah District Security Department, located behind the main road on the Sana’a–Sa’ada highway. The victim was accused of violating public morals and imitating Western cultures by decorating his bookstore in red to mark Valentine’s Day.

Following his detention, the victim was subjected to enforced disappearance for three days, during which he was denied contact with his family or any visits.

After this period, visitation was permitted⁽⁵⁵⁾. ■■

“ On Tuesday, July 2, 2024, at approximately 4:00 p.m., a security checkpoint affiliated with the Special Security Forces of the internationally recognized government arbitrarily detained a 22-year-old male civilian on the Marib–Al-Bayda road, specifically in the Al-Falaj area of Al-Wadi District in Marib Governorate. The victim was on his way back from a family visit in Sirwah District to Al-Wadi when he was stopped at the checkpoint and held for several hours before being transferred to a detention facility in the city, where he was held for approximately twenty hours. During his detention, he was subjected to humiliating treatment, including having his head forcibly shaved. He was later released following the intervention of a relative who mediated to secure his release⁽⁵⁶⁾. ■■

The victim told Mwatana, “I had gone to offer condolences to my cousin in Sirwah, using the newly opened road. But my journey turned into a nightmare. At the Al-Falaj checkpoint, I was detained simply because I came from Sirwah. Endless questions, baseless accusations. My phone battery had died, and I couldn’t prove my innocence.”

He added, “I spent a terrifying night in detention. The next day, my family learned of my situation and began searching for me. My relatives intervened, but before I was released, they shaved my head entirely at the Sahn Al-Jin military camp in the Rawdah area, on the northern side of the city.”

55. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Amran district of Amran governorate on February 20, 2024.

56. An interview conducted by Mwtana’s team in Marib district of Marib governorate on July 8, 2024.

He continued, “It was an arbitrary detention, without justification. Luckily, my family stepped in. But how many people remain imprisoned for long periods? A condolence visit turned into humiliation and degradation.”

A friend of the victim said, “My friend called me on his way back from Sirwah. ‘I’ll be there in an hour,’ he said—just before reaching the Al-Falaj checkpoint. Then his phone went off. My concern turned to panic. I went to look for him at the checkpoint—they denied it at first, then admitted to holding him. ‘Security procedures,’ they said. ‘He’ll be released tomorrow.’ My friend was released the next day—head shaved, distressed by the humiliation and arbitrary detention.”

Sixteenth: The Legal Framework on Arbitrary Detention

Arbitrary detention constitutes a serious violation of human rights and is prohibited under international laws and instruments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)⁽⁵⁷⁾ affirms in Article 9 that:

“No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.”

This principle is further reinforced by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)⁽⁵⁸⁾. Article 9(1) states: “Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.”

Additionally, Article 9(4) guarantees every detained person the right to challenge the legality of their detention before a court without delay.

The Convention Against Torture⁽⁵⁹⁾, to which Yemen is a state party, prohibits all forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment—including arbitrary detention—particularly when such detention is accompanied by violations that undermine human dignity.

57. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is available at the following link:

<https://www.un.org/ar/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.

58. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

59. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading>

According to the United Nations Principles on Arbitrary Detention⁽⁶⁰⁾, a strict legal framework is established to define the conditions under which detention is considered lawful, with an emphasis on due process and the protection of detainees' rights. Similarly, Principle 4 of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment affirms that:

"Any form of detention or imprisonment, and all measures affecting the rights of detained persons, must be ordered by, or be subject to the effective control of, a judicial authority."

Within the context of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions of 1949⁽⁶¹⁾ and their Additional Protocols prohibit arbitrary detention during armed conflicts, categorizing it as a grave breach of international law.

At the national level, the Constitution of Yemen prohibits arbitrary detention through several provisions, including Article 47(b), which states: "No person may be arrested or detained except by order of the competent judicial authority."

Additionally, the Yemeni Penal Code⁽⁶²⁾ (Law No. 12 of 1994) stipulates in Article 242: "Anyone who arrests or detains a person without legal grounds shall be punished with imprisonment."

The Yemeni Code of Criminal Procedure (Law No. 13 of 1994) reinforces detainees' rights protections. Article 73 requires that a detainee be presented to the Public Prosecution within 24 hours of arrest, while Article 7 obligates law enforcement to inform the detainee of their rights immediately upon arrest.

These domestic and international legal texts underscore the imperative of protecting individuals from all forms of arbitrary detention and ensuring accountability for those responsible for such violations.

60. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/body-principles-protection-all-persons-under-any-form-detention>

61. Geneva Conventions, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4sr4y2>

62. The Yemeni Law, available at the following link: <http://www.yemen-nic.info/yemen/dostor.php>

Seventeenth: Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment

Mwatana for Human Rights documented 76 incidents of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment affecting 103 victims, including 26 children. The Southern Transitional Council tops the list of perpetrators with 35 documented incidents involving 43 civilians, including 7 children. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group follows with 20 incidents affecting 26 victims, including 8 children. The internationally recognized government is responsible for 15 incidents involving 17 victims, including 6 children. Additionally, three incidents were attributed to unauthorized armed groups, while the Joint Forces, the Saudi-led Arab Coalition, and Eritrean forces were each responsible for one incident.



Examples of Torture Incidents

“ In the early hours of Thursday, January 6, 2024, at around 1:00 a.m., a security force affiliated with the Dar Saad District Police Station—under the Southern Transitional Council—raided the home of a 39-year-old civilian working as a day laborer in the Al-Saila area of Sheikh Othman District, Aden Governorate. The force, consisting of about 20 personnel in General Security military uniforms and armed with Kalashnikov rifles, arrived in three police vehicles. The victim was

arrested and taken to the police station's detention center, where he was subjected to brutal physical torture. Methods included beatings with hands, feet, and sticks, as well as electric shocks applied to various parts of his body. He was later transferred to Bir Ahmed Central Prison and charged with involvement in terrorist activities⁽⁶³⁾. ■■

The victim remained in detention until his family provided commercial guarantees for his release on November 25, 2024, without any accountability for those responsible for the torture he endured.

■ On the morning of Thursday, July 18, 2024, at around 9:00 a.m., an armed group of five individuals in civilian clothing—affiliated with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Mukalla, which operates under the Security Directorate of the Hadhramaut Coast and the Ministry of Interior of the internationally recognized government—arrested a 33-year-old man who worked as a pharmacy technician and political activist. The arrest took place in front of the home of the victim's brother-in-law in the Al-Sikka area, Bajamaan neighborhood, Mukalla District, Hadhramaut Governorate. The victim was taken to the CID detention center in Mukalla and held in a shared cell. He was accused of "obstructing work at a government facility and insulting a public official." ■■

On the first day of his arrest, the victim was subjected to enforced disappearance, as he was denied contact with his family or a lawyer. During this period, he was interrogated and subjected to both physical and psychological torture. On July 24, 2024, the victim was brought before the Public Funds Prosecution for further questioning, yet remained denied phone calls and visitation rights for an additional 14 days—placing him in a prolonged state of enforced disappearance. On August 1, 2024, the victim was transferred to the Mukalla Central Prison, where he was finally allowed phone calls and visits.

As of December 2024, Ali Mohsen (pseudonym – 33 years old, male) remains in detention without trial, after enduring a series of grave human rights violations, including arbitrary detention and torture.

63. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team with the victim's brother in Al-Mansoura district Aden governorate, on December 8, 2024.

According to the victim's testimony, his ordeal began after he attended a protest by Qat vendors against the local tax director. He documented the event and posted about it on his Facebook page. Shortly thereafter, he received direct threats from the security director, who accused him of informing human rights organizations about prison conditions in the governorate and claimed the post was an "insult to a public official." These threats quickly materialized into action with his arrest.

In detention, the victim reported severe beatings and torture. He stated, "They tied me to a chair with ropes and took turns slapping me across the face. They tried to force me to unlock my phone with my fingerprint, but failed because I don't use fingerprint access. That's when the investigator lost control and ordered them to beat me severely."

He added that the torture included methods such as "suffocation," which made him feel as though he was about to die. Exhausted both physically and mentally, he eventually yielded and unlocked his phone. He was then forced to dictate a false apology post, retracting his original statements. Despite feeling nauseous and dizzy from the torture, he was forced to sign and stamp the investigation record without seeing its contents⁽⁶⁴⁾.

The interrogation and torture lasted over an hour and a half. To date, Ali Mohsen remains in custody without clear formal charges or being brought to trial—a blatant violation of both national and international laws that guarantee the right to a fair trial and prohibit torture and inhuman treatment.

■ On Monday, November 18, 2024, at approximately 2:00 p.m., a 14-year-old boy voluntarily went to the Al-Thulaya Police Station in Al-Ta'izziyah District to turn himself in after a friend informed him that the police were looking for him. Upon arrival, he was detained and subjected to torture. ■■

64. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team inside the Mukalla central prison, Hadhramaut governorate, on September 8, 2024.



“

The torture only ceased after he was coerced into confessing to fabricated charges and forced to sign a statement without being allowed to read it.

”

The story began when the victim and two of his 13-year-old peers were exploited by an individual who asked them to sell various items in exchange for small sums of money. Unbeknownst to them, the items were stolen. The situation escalated quickly when forces affiliated with Al-Thulaya Police Station—under the Security Directorate of Taiz, controlled by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group—arrested them on charges of theft.

As soon as the victim arrived at the police station, he was subjected to severe physical and psychological torture. He was punched in the face and head, brutally kicked, and beaten with a metal rod on various parts of his body, all while he pleaded and screamed for mercy. The torture only ceased after he was coerced into confessing to fabricated charges and forced to sign a statement without being allowed to read it.

The victim was not alone in suffering these abuses. His two 13-year-old friends endured similar torture. They witnessed each other being beaten and humiliated, intensifying their fear and trauma. One of the most harrowing scenes occurred when the third child came to the police station voluntarily, only to be subjected to even harsher torture in front of his detained father, who begged in vain for the abuse to stop. Even the child was not spared from humiliation—he was beaten and insulted in a heartbreaking scene.

This systematic abuse continued. The boys were transferred to a juvenile care facility while still suffering from visible physical and psychological injuries. The victim reported that the torture left lasting effects, including an ear infection caused by the blows to his head. As of December 2024, they remain in detention, with families allowed only brief visits through a window—leaving loved ones in a constant state of distress and worry⁽⁶⁵⁾.

65. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team inside Al-Ta'izziyah Prosecution Office, Taiz governorate, on December 18, 2024.

Eighteenth: The Legal Framework on Torture

Torture is defined as any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for purposes such as obtaining a confession, coercing a third party to confess or provide information, punishing, intimidating, or compelling an individual or a third party to perform a particular act.

No exceptional circumstances whatsoever—whether a state of war, a threat, internal political instability, or any other public emergency—may be invoked as a justification for torture. Nor may orders from superior officers or a public authority be cited as a legitimate excuse for committing acts of torture⁽⁶⁶⁾.

According to Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment⁽⁶⁷⁾.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), under Article 7, affirms the right to be free from torture and, in other provisions, requires that all persons deprived of their liberty be treated with humanity and respect for their inherent dignity⁽⁶⁸⁾.

Under international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, to which Yemen is a party, prohibit torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Civilians are specifically protected under Article 37 of the IV Geneva Convention, which mandates humane treatment of detained civilians and prohibits all forms of cruelty, including detention in facilities that fail to meet basic standards of hygiene, lighting, access to clean water, adequate space, food, and drink.

66. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading>

67. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, available at: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.un.org/ar/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights&ved=2ahUKEwi_1Iqv7aKEAxVWcKQEHZ_fBKEQFnoECBcQAQ&usg=AOvVaw3A6co79kvl87P-ZXIPs-tV

68. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, available at the following link: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

Under international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, to which Yemen is a party, prohibit torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Civilians are specifically protected under Article 37 of the IV Geneva Convention, which mandates humane treatment of detained civilians and prohibits all forms of cruelty, including detention in facilities that fail to meet basic standards of hygiene, lighting, access to clean water, adequate space, food, and drink⁽⁶⁹⁾.

In non-international armed conflicts, Common Article 3 provides protection for persons not taking an active part in hostilities, including civilians and detained combatants. It prohibits violence to life and person, in particular murder in all its forms, cruel treatment, torture, and outrages upon personal dignity.

Torture committed under certain circumstances—such as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population—constitutes a crime against humanity under article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Nineteenth: Extrajudicial Killings

Mwatana for Human Rights documented nine cases of extrajudicial killings—killings carried out without adherence to legal procedures that ensure justice and fairness, such as fair trial standards and due process guarantees. These incidents resulted in the deaths of 11 civilians, including one child. The Southern Transitional Council (STC) was responsible for 5 of these killings, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group for 2, and the internationally recognized government for 2.

69. Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949, available at: <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.icrc.org/ar/doc/resources/documents/misc/5ns1a8.htm&ved=2ahUKEwjdm8DB7aKEAxUuXaQEHffvDnMQFnoECCMQAQ&usg=AOvVaw08UNNe5bltHzZRsx3Eb8gz>

70. Rome Statute, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/rome-statute-international-criminal-court>



Examples of Extrajudicial Killings

“ At 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 28, 2024, three soldiers from the General Security forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council in the city of Ataq, Shabwah Governorate, shot and killed an unarmed 33-year-old civilian who worked as a qat vendor in the market. He was shot from behind and died instantly at the scene⁽⁷¹⁾. ”

The victim was killed outside the bounds of the law following a dispute earlier that day between him and the soldiers. The soldiers had threatened to execute him on the spot, and they returned in the evening and carried out the threat.

“ On the evening of Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 8:08 p.m., a force from the Coalition Security Checkpoint in the Madinah District of Marib Governorate detained a 29-year-old civilian. The number of security personnel involved in the arrest is unknown. The detainee was transferred to the Second Security Zone Prison, which is under the jurisdiction of the Al-Rawda Police Station. This prison operates under the supervision of the Marib Police Director, who is linked to the Minister of Interior of the internationally recognized Yemeni government. On the morning of Wednesday, May 8, the man was found dead in a

71. An interview conducted by Mwatana with the victim's brother in Ataq district of Shabwah governorate on March 29, 2024.

bathroom inside the Al-Rawda Prison—he had been hanged. The incident raised numerous questions about the conditions of his detention and his safety while in custody⁽⁷²⁾. ■■

■ On Tuesday, June 2, 2024, the family of a 22-year-old young man, a soldier detained in Al-Saleh city in Taiz, received news of his death. Authorities claimed he had died by suicide, hanging himself. However, the family strongly rejects this account. ■■

The family stated that their son had been detained following a dispute with a member of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, whom they hold responsible for his imprisonment. The family maintains that the circumstances surrounding his death point to murder, not suicide, as was officially reported⁽⁷³⁾.

Twentieth: The Legal Framework on Extrajudicial Killings

Under the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, extrajudicial killing is defined as any intentional killing carried out against individuals outside the scope of any recognized legal or judicial procedures. This form of killing constitutes a grave violation of the fundamental human right to life—a core right enshrined in all international human rights instruments⁽⁷⁴⁾.

This right is protected under international law, which emphasizes that any action resulting in the deprivation of life must be subject to fair legal and judicial guarantees. Instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 3) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 6) prohibit and criminalize extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, underscoring the importance of upholding the rule of law and applying justice standards.

These instruments obligate states to take effective measures to prevent such violations, including holding those responsible to account, ensuring transparent and impartial investigations into each case, and prosecuting perpetrators. Preventing extrajudicial killings is a cornerstone of protecting human dignity and safeguarding fundamental human rights.

72. An interview conducted by Mwtana via phone with a relative of the victim on May 22, 2024.

73. An interview conducted by Mwtana with the victim's mother via phone on July 9, 2024.

74. Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/ukwrf8j7>

Twenty-First: Child Recruitment and Use

In 2024, Yemen continued to witness persistent violations involving the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict by various parties to the conflict, with a significant increase in such violations perpetrated by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group under political and religious slogans. Warring parties exploited the dire economic and social conditions faced by Yemeni families to justify the recruitment and use of children. Additionally, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group leveraged narratives of resistance against Israel and the United States, and support for Gaza, to promote and justify child recruitment.

Recruited children are utilized in both combat and non-combat roles, including serving as frontline fighters, guarding facilities, transporting ammunition and supplies, acting as informants or messengers, and manning checkpoints.

During their recruitment, these children are subjected to severe violations that have lasting impacts on their lives. Many have been injured or killed in combat, or suffer from acute psychological trauma resulting from exposure to violence, coercion to kill, or forced participation in military operations. They are also deprived of access to education.

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 102 incidents of child recruitment and use. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 73 of these cases. The STC was responsible for 21 incidents, while forces affiliated with the internationally recognized government were responsible for 8 of the total documented cases.



Examples of Child Recruitment and Use

“ On the morning of Saturday, February 3, 2024, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group recruited a 17-year-old boy in the Fawt area, Haydan District, Sa’dah Governorate. The recruitment was carried out with his father’s consent, who responded to the group’s supervisors’ call to register their sons in what they referred to as “Al-Aqsa Flood and Support Gaza” courses. The boy enrolled in one such course held in remote mountainous areas and lasting 20 days. During this period, he underwent intensive ideological indoctrination and military training, which concluded with field exercises using various weapons. On the evening of the final day, he and several others were transported in the group’s military vehicles to the governorate center to participate in military and scouting parades and activities.

Approximately five days later, the boy was appointed as a driver for a military vehicle under the supervision of one of the group’s military commanders. He was tasked with supplying and provisioning sites under this commander’s authority in the Maqbanah area of Taiz Governorate. On April 15, 2024, the boy was killed in an airstrike carried out by American warplanes targeting the location where he was. Three days after the incident, his body arrived at the Republican Hospital in Sa’dah city, where it was handed over to his family. He was buried the following day in his hometown in Haydan District⁽⁷⁵⁾. ”

75. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Haydan district of Sa’dah governorate on June 11, 2024.

“ On Sunday, April 28, 2024, in Sa’dah city, Sa’dah District, Sa’dah Governorate, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group recruited a 16-year-old boy after he joined the summer center at Al-Thawra School. During the center’s 45-day session, the boy received training in weapons handling and combat skills. ”

At the beginning of June 2024, the child was sent to perform combat duties with the group on the Al-Yatmah front, in Khab wa Ash Sha’af District, Al-Jawf Governorate. He was killed on July 5, 2024, during armed clashes with internationally recognized government forces.

A neighbor of the child (41 years old, male) told Mwatana: “There was a summer center at Al-Thawra School in Sa’dah. It remained closed to the outside for 45 days, during which children received military training, including combat and marksmanship. The boy’s family, known for their religious extremism, sent him there fully aware he would be recruited, hoping he would gain influence or authority in the area.

After the training ended, the boy returned home carrying a weapon and a military ID card. He became aggressive and argumentative, prompting his family to request his deployment to the front in Al-Jawf. In June 2024, he was transferred to the Al-Yatmah front, where he was killed in an ambush on July 5. His body remained exposed in the open for two days before being brought back to his village and buried in a cemetery affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group⁽⁷⁶⁾.”

“ On the morning of Thursday, August 1, 2024, in the Abr Mushasha’ area, Tur Al Bahah District, Lahj Governorate, the 8th Border Guard Brigade, affiliated with the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council, recruited a 16-year-old boy (Badr Hassoun – pseudonym). Badr joined the brigade’s camp voluntarily and was accepted as a reserve soldier. He was assigned to work at a newly established checkpoint in the area⁽⁷⁷⁾. ”

76. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Sa’dah district of Sa’dah governorate on July 8, 2024.

77. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Tur Al-Baha district of Lahj governorate on September 19, 2024.



“

The boy received no training and was promised a military ID, but he did not receive a monthly salary—only a small daily allowance and quantities of qat. He joined without his parents’ consent but returns home from time to time.

”

While stationed at the checkpoint, an incident occurred that resulted in the death of another 16-year-old boy, who worked as a porter at the same location. During a monitoring shift, Badr was carrying a Kalashnikov rifle in a ready position. As the victim sat next to him, Badr accidentally pulled the trigger, firing three rounds—two of which struck the victim under the right armpit and exited through the left side of his back. The boy died instantly.

Badr fled the scene, while civilians who heard the gunfire transported the victim to Tur Al Bahah General Hospital, where doctors confirmed his death. Despite the victim's family's demands to bring the perpetrator to justice, the 8th Border Guard Brigade refused, claiming the matter fell under military rather than civilian jurisdiction.

This tragic case exemplifies the grave risks of child recruitment and their deployment in unregulated military contexts, and the resulting humanitarian and social catastrophes.

“ On Sunday, January 7, 2024, at approximately 8:00 a.m., the Central Security Forces—affiliated with the internationally recognized government—recruited a 17-year-old boy and assigned him to a security checkpoint near his home on the main road at Naqil Alyafah, Qadas subdistrict, Al-Mawasit District, Taiz Governorate. ”

The boy received no training and was promised a military ID, but he did not receive a monthly salary—only a small daily allowance and quantities of qat. He joined without his parents' consent but returns home from time to time⁽⁷⁸⁾.

Twenty-Second: Legal Framework on Child Recruitment and Use

The recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts constitute a flagrant violation of human rights and international law. The legal framework prohibiting the recruitment and use of children is grounded in international treaties and domestic legislation aimed at protecting children from being drawn into armed conflict.

78. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Mawasit district of Taiz governorate on March 15, 2024.

At the forefront of these instruments is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Yemen became a party in 1991. Article 38 of the Convention prohibits the participation of children under the age of 15 in armed conflict and obligates states to take all feasible measures to ensure that children do not take part in hostilities⁽⁷⁹⁾. This protection is reinforced by the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), which Yemen ratified in 2007. The protocol raises the minimum age for compulsory recruitment to 18 and requires states to take effective measures to prevent such recruitment⁽⁸⁰⁾.

In addition, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols—particularly Additional Protocol II—prohibit the use of children under the age of 15 in armed conflicts and classify their recruitment as a war crime⁽⁸¹⁾. This prohibition aligns with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), which defines the recruitment and use of children under 15 in armed conflict as crimes subject to international prosecution, although Yemen has not ratified the Statute despite signing it in 1998.

Moreover, ILO Convention No. 182, which Yemen ratified in 2000, identifies the recruitment of children for armed conflict as one of the worst forms of child labor, requiring immediate elimination⁽⁸²⁾.

At the UN level, UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) established a monitoring and reporting mechanism for grave violations against children in armed conflict, including recruitment, thereby affirming the severity of this violation and the necessity of accountability⁽⁸³⁾.

On the national level, the Yemeni Constitution guarantees the protection of children's rights and their safety from all forms of exploitation. Additionally, Law No. (45) of 2002 on the Rights of the Child obliges the state to protect children from involvement in armed conflict. Articles 149 and 150 of this law explicitly prohibit

79. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), available at the following link:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

80. The Optional Protocol to the CRC, available at the following link:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-rights-child-involvement-children>

81. <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ar/ihl-treaties/apii-1977>

82. ILO Convention No. 182, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/7hbr2pvd>

83. UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005), available at the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/ypdx22vt>

the recruitment of children or their participation in combat operations and mandate the government to take all necessary measures to ensure the enforcement of this prohibition⁽⁸⁴⁾.

Furthermore, Law No. (15) of 2000 on Military Service sets the legal age for military enlistment at 18 years, making any attempt to recruit children a clear violation of the law⁽⁸⁵⁾. The Yemeni Penal Code also criminalizes all forms of child exploitation, including their use in armed conflict⁽⁸⁶⁾.

Twenty-Third: Sexual Violence

Since the onset of the armed conflict in Yemen in September 2014, the country has witnessed a significant rise in human rights violations, including an increase in conflict-related sexual violence. Sexual violence has become one of the most prevalent forms of abuse perpetrated against the most vulnerable groups in society, used as a tool of coercion, intimidation, and subjugation by parties to the conflict. The statistics presented in this section reflect the state of sexual violence in Yemen during 2024, shedding light on its patterns, impacts, and the major challenges in documenting such violations.

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 25 incidents of sexual violence, of which 24 involved child victims. These incidents included various forms of sexual violence, ranging from harassment and rape to sexual exploitation. The STC was found responsible for 10 incidents, while the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 5 incidents. The internationally recognized government was responsible for 3 incidents, one incident was attributed to the Saudi/UAE-led coalition, and 6 incidents were attributed to individuals or entities with no official authority.

84. Law No. (45) of 2002 on the Rights of the Child, available at the following link:

http://yemen-nic.info/db/laws_je/detail.php?ID=11754

85. Law No. (15) of 2000 on Military Service, available at the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/mpa3upft>

86. The Yemeni Penal Code, available at the following link: [http:](http://agoyemen.net/lib_details.php?id=5)

[//agoyemen.net/lib_details.php?id=5](http://agoyemen.net/lib_details.php?id=5)



The conflict in Yemen has led to the near-total collapse of both legal and social systems, creating an enabling environment for the escalation of sexual violence and the continued impunity of perpetrators. As the humanitarian crisis deepens and millions are displaced, children—both girls and boys—as well as other vulnerable groups, have become increasingly exposed to such violations.

Mwatana's team faces significant challenges in accessing and documenting these types of violations, primarily due to the fear of victims and their families of speaking out. This fear stems from the threat of social stigma or potential retaliation by the perpetrators. Consequently, the number of documented cases presented in this section represents only a small fraction of the actual number of such violations.

Examples of Sexual Violence Incidents

“ On the evening of Friday, January 5, 2024, around 9:30 p.m., in Khanfar District, Abyan Governorate, a UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) soldier and his civilian friend sexually assaulted a 13-year-old displaced boy.

The victim was en route to purchase supplies for his father's shop when the perpetrators, traveling on the soldier's motorcycle, lured him away. They took the child to a deserted area, beat him, bound his hands, stripped him, and took turns raping him. The victim eventually escaped and reached his father's shop in

a critical condition. His father filed a report with the Khanfar District Security, leading to the arrest and interrogation of the perpetrators. A medical report from Al-Razi General Hospital in Abyan confirmed bruises on the victim's face, chin, back, and left thigh. A forensic examination further corroborated the rape. ■■

The child's father (34, male) stated, "I work in a barbershop after being displaced from Ibb Governorate due to dire circumstances. I have three children; the eldest is Mohammed Amer (13). My son returned to the shop covered in bruises and unable to walk. He told me he was assaulted and raped. I reported it to the Transitional Council authorities in extreme grief and anger, even threatening to kill the rapists. Promises were made to arrest them, and I took my son to Al-Razi Hospital where rape was medically confirmed, as well as by forensics. I shared the report image, but the perpetrators haven't been transferred to Zinjibar Central Prison—they remain detained in Jabal Khanfar under the Security Belt forces pending legal procedures. My son now suffers severe psychological trauma, refuses to attend school, and isolates himself all day⁽⁸⁷⁾."

■ On Saturday, September 21, 2024, around 3:00 p.m., in Al-Mekhlaf Village, Samar District, Hajjah Governorate, an Ansar Allah (Houthi) soldier raped a 14-year-old boy. The soldier, stationed at a security checkpoint, called the victim as he left home to visit a classmate, offering "bread and yogurt for his family." When the boy approached, the soldier dragged him into a small thatch-and-mud hut used by checkpoint personnel, gagged him with a scarf, pinned him face-down, stripped him, and raped him. The assailant threatened to kill him if he spoke of the incident. The victim returned home exhausted and fainted; upon regaining consciousness, he informed his parents. The boy's father sought help from the village sheikh, but their efforts to apprehend the perpetrator were met with non-cooperation. The security checkpoint supervisor dismissively responded: "What if the child tempted the soldier?⁽⁸⁸⁾"

On Monday, September 16, 2024, around 12:00 p.m., a young man and three female relatives sexually assaulted a girl in Bani Yusuf, Mawasit District, Taiz Governorate.

The perpetrators are shielded by a sheikh affiliated with the internationally recognized government forces, who ignored pleas for intervention from the

87. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Khanfar district of Abyan governorate on January 14, 2024.

88. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Samar district of Hajjah governorate on October 3, 2024.

victim's family. The attackers brutally beat the girl, stripped her, and subjected her to horrific abuse while threatening her. Neighboring girls intervened, rescuing her. She lost consciousness and later awoke at a local clinic before being hospitalized for treatment⁽⁸⁹⁾. ■■

The victim's grandfather (70, male) declared, "Security forces and the sheikh are complicit—no one was punished! The men were released on bail. We've lost everything... even our dignity!" He added: "The sheikh conducts arbitrary arrests and jails whomever he wishes. They've escalated to assaulting a child and exposing her body! There's no protection or justice."

■■ On Thursday, March 7, 2024, around 11:30 AM, six armed members of the Elite Brigade (affiliated with the UAE-backed Al-Rabwah Camp under the Saudi-Emirati coalition) detained a 28-year-old male fish vendor near the Central Prison gate in Mukalla's Sawqam area, Al-Shifa neighborhood. The victim had just visited his detained brother. He was taken to Al-Rabwah Camp detention facility in Mukalla, accused of collaborating with Al-Qaeda and attempting to smuggle detainees from the political ward. After eight days, he was transferred to Al-Dabbah Camp in Shahr District. Approximately 22 days later, he was moved to Mukalla's Criminal Investigation Prison for three days before being returned to Mukalla Central Prison. The charges stemmed from alleged "prison blueprints" drawn on wrapping paper used for food brought to his brother. The victim endured torture and sexual violence to coerce false confessions about Al-Qaeda ties and the origin of the drawings. He has been forcibly disappeared for over two months. Though brought to the Prosecution Office, interrogation was postponed due to "end of official work hours," leaving him arbitrarily detained in solitary confinement⁽⁹⁰⁾. ■■

89. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Ta'izziyah district of Taiz governorate on October 13, 2024.

90. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Mukalla, Hadhramaut governorate, in May 6, 2024.



**What if the CHILD TEMPTED
the SOLDIER !**



The victim, a 28-year-old male, told Mwatana, “After my family and I finished visiting my brother detained in the political wing in the well-known ‘Fuwwah Cell’ case, as I was about to leave, the guards at the main prison gate asked me to wait, saying the prison director wanted me for something. I told my family to go ahead to the car, and I would see what it was and join them. After only about 5 minutes, I was surprised by a light brown military vehicle carrying about 6 soldiers wearing army uniforms speeding towards the gate from behind one of the internal prison wings. It stopped near me; the soldiers surrounded me and arrested me. I asked them, ‘What’s the reason? What did I do? I’m just visiting my brother.’ One of them told me, ‘Get in with us, and you’ll find out later.’ I got into their white double-cab Hilux parked at the prison gate. They blindfolded me, handcuffed me, and shackled my legs, saying, ‘Don’t utter a word until we arrive.’

They first took me somewhere I believe was inside the prison; the car stopped for an hour. Then they moved outside the prison until we reached Al-Rabwa Camp. There, they took off my blindfold, and I saw the camp. They detained me in a solitary confinement cell, about 2x3 meters, with no lighting or ventilation except for small air vents high on one wall. They only allowed me to use the bathroom after asking the guard’s permission.

After an hour, they gave me a lunch of rice with fish. I ate a little because I was very anxious and didn’t know what was happening to me. This continued for two days. The military force that arrested me belongs to Al-Rabwa Camp, and they are most likely affiliated with the Elite Brigade since they handle guarding Wing No. 1 inside the Central Prison. They took my wallet and wristwatch; the wallet contained no more than 7,000 Yemeni riyals.

On the third day, they started interrogating me. There were 4 investigators; I didn’t know them because my eyes were covered during the interrogation. They interrogated me inside Al-Rabwa Camp about 6 times over 3 days, averaging twice a day. Each interrogation session lasted at least two hours, during which they subjected me to severe torture. They used hands and feet to beat me, dunked my head in a water basin, and beat me with a braided copper cable. The marks from the beating and the cable are still on my body. The beating and whipping concentrated on my abdomen, back, legs, and arms; they avoided direct blows to my face.”

The victim added, "During the three days they interrogated me, they would put me in a cell called 'Al-Daghatah' (The Press/Pressure cell). It was very small, no more than 1x1 meter and about 2 meters high. I would suffocate inside, so they would take me out for a few minutes then put me back in, same as when going to the bathroom.

All interrogation sessions were accompanied by torture and beating. Even outside interrogation, <Al-Daghtah> was one of their torture methods. They accused me of collaborating with Al-Qaeda. I told them the truth, but they didn't want to believe it.

After the last interrogation session at Al-Rabwa Camp, they forced me, blindfolded and under beating, to fingerprint some documents. Then they returned me to the first cell, where I stayed for another two days. I started to think things were improving. After that, they transferred me blindfolded and shackled hand and foot with iron restraints to Al-Dabba Camp in Ash-Shihr District – I learned this during interrogation.

There, they detained me in a cell, which I believe was a caravan room with vents on two sides, measuring about 2x3 meters. It had a bathroom inside, but no door. The food and drink provided were of good quality. At Al-Dabba Camp, I was interrogated twice by an Emirati investigator assisted by a Yemeni investigator.

There, I was subjected to torture by beating with hands, feet, and whipping with a braided copper cable. The Emirati investigator also stripped me of my clothes, leaving me only in my underwear. He threatened to rape me, saying, <We will do to you what a man does to a woman,> and put his hand on my buttocks. He was on top of me while I was on the ground, blindfolded and handcuffed/shackled. I said to him, <Do it, I have no power or strength.> I was screaming in frustration, <Do it!>... My words provoked him. He wrapped his hand around my neck and pulled it back forcefully until I thought he would break my neck. He was screaming at the top of his voice, <I will kill you if you don't talk.>"

Twenty-Fourth: The Legal Framework on Sexual Violence

International legal frameworks converge to prohibit and criminalize acts of sexual violence committed in the context of armed conflict, recognizing such violations as grave breaches of human rights and international law. Under certain conditions, these acts may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Both IHL and IHRL categorically prohibit all forms of sexual violence at all times and against all individuals. In armed conflict, sexual violence is recognized as a war crime and a crime against humanity. These crimes include rape and other forms of sexual assault. International treaties and conventions obligate states and non-state actors to take preventive measures and to hold perpetrators accountable.

Concerning the protection of children, international law accords special attention to this vulnerable group, particularly in times of armed conflict. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) stands as a cornerstone in this regard, obligating states to protect children from all forms of exploitation and violence, including sexual violence. Article 34 of the CRC specifically calls on states to take appropriate measures to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse of children in any form⁽⁹¹⁾. Additionally, the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) prohibits the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 in armed conflict. It emphasizes the need to protect them from the risks associated with sexual violence⁽⁹²⁾.

Furthermore, United Nations Security Council resolutions have provided clear directives for the protection of children in armed conflict. Resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009) established mechanisms to monitor and document grave violations against children, including sexual violence. Resolution 2427 (2018) reaffirmed the importance of protecting children from sexual violence during armed conflict and called on states and warring parties to take effective measures to ensure accountability for such violations.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is one of the key legal instruments in this framework, classifying sexual violence against children—including rape and sexual slavery—as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The

91. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/29rzwbxw>

92. The Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/yddh2e3e>

Geneva Conventions and their Second Additional Protocol further strengthen this legal framework by prohibiting all forms of sexual violence against civilians, including children, in both international and non-international armed conflicts⁽⁹³⁾.

Twenty-Fifth: Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities

The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, in areas under its control, has deliberately used schools for mobilization and recruitment purposes—an explicit violation of children's rights to safe and neutral education. The group has committed a series of systematic and diverse violations against the educational process, starting with the imposition of its own Hijri calendar, which contradicts the global academic calendar. This has disrupted the school year and undermined the stability of the education system. In areas such as Al Hudaydah, Hajjah, Taiz, and Al-Dhale', where temperatures soar during the summer, the group forced children to attend school under harsh conditions, endangering their health and safety.

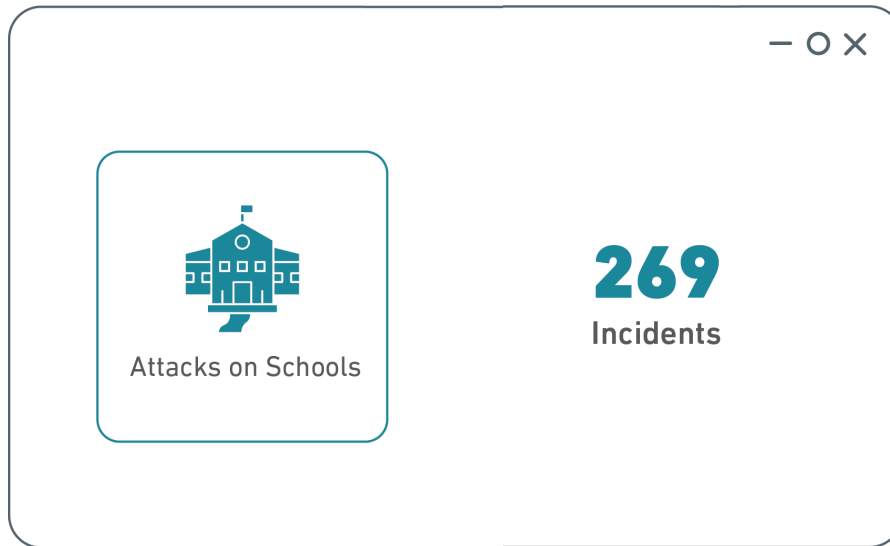
In some instances, the group compelled students to participate in marches and protests under slogans supporting political causes such as "Support for Gaza," leading to the disruption of classes and hindering students' academic progress. Moreover, the group introduced a subject called "Educational Guidance" into the basic education curriculum, designed to promote its ideology and beliefs—an overt politicization of education that threatens its neutrality and impairs students' critical and objective thinking.

These violations have been accompanied by the continued suspension of salaries for education sector workers in areas under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, as well as declining salaries in areas controlled by other parties. This situation has been exacerbated by the collapse of the local currency and disparities in exchange rates, which have severely impacted the educational process. Teachers have become increasingly unable to fulfill their professional responsibilities due to the economic hardships they face as a result of salary suspensions or reductions.

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 269 attacks on schools and educational facilities. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 248 of these incidents, while the internationally recognized government was responsible for 11 incidents. The Southern Transitional Council was responsible for 7 incidents,

93. UN Security Council resolutions, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/mrbmds4h>

and the Joint Forces were responsible for 2 incidents. One incident was attributed to the Saudi/UAE-led coalition.



These violations highlight the immense challenges facing education in Yemen, where schools—meant to be safe havens for children—have become arenas for political and military conflict. The use of schools for mobilization and political recruitment is a violation of international law, including the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, which prohibit the use of educational institutions for military or political purposes. Moreover, subjecting children to politicized curricula undermines their right to quality and inclusive education and endangers the future of an entire generation.

Examples of Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities

“ On Sunday, May 26, 2024, at approximately 10:00 a.m., in the Fawtarea of Haydan District, Sa’dah Governorate, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group used the Ammar bin Yasser Basic and Secondary School to hold a cultural event titled “Misguided Concepts and the Enemy’s Methods of Subjugating the Nation.” The event included the opening of an exhibition displaying models and replicas of weapons, boats, and other military equipment. Following the event, students from the summer center—ongoing at the school since April 2024—participated in a

parade and a march on foot from the Fawt area to the district center of Haydan.

Around 200 students took part in the parade, about ten of whom were seen wearing military uniforms, while the rest wore scout uniforms. Although the students in military attire were not armed, their appearance in such uniforms in an educational context raises serious concerns about the exploitation of children for promotional and militarized propaganda purposes⁽⁹⁴⁾. ■■

■ On Monday, April 22, 2024, in the Bayt Sanhob area of Al-Thawra District in Amanat Al-Asimah, Sana'a, registration began for the open summer center named "Martyr Zaid Ali Musleh Center." The center was established within the private Wahat Al-Ilm School (for boys and girls) pursuant to directives issued by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, which are being implemented in schools under their control across various regions and governorates. The center attracted around 40 students, aged 6 to 17, from various educational levels. It offers a curriculum that includes Quranic studies alongside materials specific to the group, used for ideological indoctrination and promoting its doctrine. The school day at the center runs from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., every day except Thursday and Friday, and continued until June 8, 2024. ■■

A 39-year-old female eyewitness told Mwatana, "Registration began at 9:00 a.m., and attendance was limited to male students aged 6 to 17, as the group prohibits gender mixing—even in educational stages where such mixing is typically allowed in some areas, like grades one to six or grade nine. It appears that about 40 students enrolled in the summer center at the school, from various educational levels. Despite rumors that the students were being trained in the use of weapons, there is no concrete evidence that this occurred at this particular center. However, the students receive ideological booklets issued by the Ansar Allah group, which contain religious and social teachings. The school day lasts for three hours, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m., and the center operated until Saturday, June 8, 2024. These activities have sparked widespread controversy over the exploitation of educational institutions for purposes that serve the Houthis' agenda—an agenda they seek to impose on all children in schools, without anyone daring to oppose them⁽⁹⁵⁾."

94. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Haydan district of Sa'dah governorate on June 10, 2024.

95. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Thawra district, Amanat Al-Asimah, on June 2, 2024.

A blurred background image of a classroom. On the left, a man in a patterned shirt is partially visible. In the center and right, several children are seated at a wooden table, looking towards the left. The background shows a whiteboard and a window with a blue frame.

“

The Education Office no longer pays attention to the quality of education or to evaluating students' academic performance.

”

“ On Monday, January 15, 2024, at around 11:00 a.m., at Nashwan Al-Hamri School in Al-Bustan neighborhood on Shareb Street, Old Sana’a District, the capital city of Sana’a, an armed member of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, dressed in military uniform, conducted a training session for a group of approximately 25 students on how to disassemble and reassemble a Russian Kalashnikov rifle. The training took place inside one of the classrooms, completely disrupting the educational process for the day. The impact was not limited to the participating students, who were deprived of their right to education, but also affected the rest of the students and teaching staff, creating an atmosphere of discomfort and insecurity throughout the school⁽⁹⁶⁾. ”

“ On Saturday, September 30, 2023, at 8:00 a.m., the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group organized a celebratory event for the Prophet’s birthday in the courtyard of a co-educational basic school located in Dhi al-Sufal District, Ibb Governorate. During this event, there were calls for mobilization and jihad, accompanied by the ideological indoctrination of children with sectarian ideas. The use of the school for this event disrupted the educational process, resulting in the loss of three class periods and depriving 588 male and female students of their right to education that day. ”

A member of the teaching staff (52 years old, male) told Mwatana, “The organization of activities and events unrelated to the educational process has become a heavy burden on schools in areas under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. These countless and relentless events have led to a continuous disruption of students’ academic learning. Schools have increasingly become venues for celebrations and ideological messaging rather than centers for education. The Education Office no longer pays attention to the quality of education or to evaluating students’ academic performance. Its focus has shifted entirely to ensuring schools comply with organizing these events, which have nothing to do with education.”

He added, “This situation clearly points to a deliberate effort to dismantle the educational system, as education has lost its place in society. Student attendance at school has become merely symbolic and does not reflect a genuine commitment to learning. Meanwhile, teachers—who are supposed to be the cornerstone of the

96. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in the old Sana’a city, Amanat Al-Asimah, on February 21, 2024.

educational process—have lost much of their ability to fulfill their role. This is mainly due to the suspension of salaries, which are their only income, forcing them to seek alternatives such as financial incentives offered by some organizations.

In this context, schools also suffer from a shortage of qualified staff and are forced to rely on untrained female volunteers without access to proper teaching tools. Most of them are high school or university graduates with non-educational backgrounds, which limits their teaching capacity and makes it difficult to meet students' educational needs effectively.

Moreover, these events are imposed compulsorily, and neither schools nor teachers can refuse to organize them. Any failure to implement them results in harassment and threats. Personally, I was pressured by the education administration, which threatened to transfer me if I did not comply. However, I did not try to resist these pressures—instead, I expressed my willingness to resign and even offered to hand over the school keys, which they refused to accept.

Despite all these difficulties, my dedication to ensuring children continue their education is what keeps me enduring this harsh reality—driven by my belief in education as a fundamental right for children and the need to preserve what remains of the educational process under such complex circumstances⁽⁹⁷⁾."

“ On Monday, March 25, 2024, at approximately 9:30 p.m., in the Joule Al-Raydah area of Mayfa'a District, Shabwah Governorate, members of the Yemeni government-affiliated Islah Party forces organized a Ramadan event at Joule Al-Raydah Basic Education School. The event lasted about three and a half hours and was attended by party leaders. Figures affiliated with the National Shield Forces, along with armed members of the Islah Party, were also present⁽⁹⁸⁾ . ”

“ On Saturday, June 8, 2024, at around 9:00 a.m., members of the Southern Transitional Council held a meeting at Radhum Basic Education School in Radhum District, Shabwah Governorate. The meeting reviewed the council's activities and discussed future plans, with the participation of the council's vice president, the head of the political department, and around 25 members. The meeting lasted two hours, during which photos of council president Aidarous Al-Zubaidi and the flag of

97. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Dhi al-Sufal District, Ibb Governorate, on March 9, 2024.

98. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Mayfa'a district, Shabwah governorate, on October 8, 2024.

the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen were displayed. This provoked discontent among local residents, who rejected the transformation of the school into a venue for political events. It is worth noting that the meeting took place during the summer holiday, and the Southern Transitional Council bears responsibility for the incident⁽⁹⁹⁾. ■■

■ On Saturday, May 3, 2024, at approximately 9:00 a.m., the Giants Brigades, part of the Joint Forces, used Karim Co-Educational Primary School in Al-Suwaida'a village, Al-Suwaida'a subdistrict, Al-Wazi'iyah District, Taiz Governorate, as a military assembly point for soldiers. This use has continued since May 2022 and was still ongoing at the time this report was written.

The forces entered the school based on an agreement with troops affiliated with Haitham Qassem, a former Minister of Defense and a commander of a brigade within the Giants Brigades. As a result of this militarization, local families refrained from sending their daughters to the school. Consequently, girls are now only taught up to the fourth grade, even though the school previously offered education up to the seventh grade. The number of enrolled students dropped from 400 to 230 due to this military presence.

It is worth noting that this school was previously targeted by an airstrike conducted by the Saudi/UAE-led coalition in April 2016, which resulted in the destruction of large parts of the school. Two of the six classrooms were completely destroyed, while the remaining four were left in a severely dilapidated condition⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. ■■

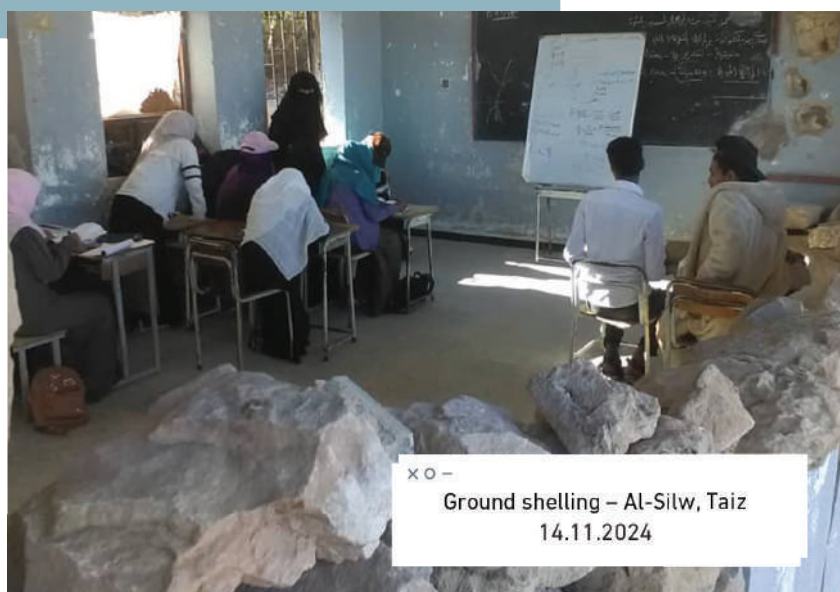
99. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Radhum district, Shabwah governorate, on June 11, 2024.

100. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Wazi'iyah district, Tiaz governorate, on May 3, 2024.



× ○ —

Ground shelling – Al-Silw, Taiz
21.12.2023



× ○ —

Ground shelling – Al-Silw, Taiz
14.11.2024

Twenty-Sixth: The Legal Framework on Attacks on Schools and Educational Facilities

Attacks on educational facilities constitute a clear violation of both international and domestic laws, which guarantee the protection of educational institutions as civilian objects of special importance. IHL and IHRL unequivocally prohibit such attacks, recognizing schools as spaces that must be protected at all times and must not be targeted or used for military purposes.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions⁽¹⁰¹⁾ and their Additional Protocols emphasize the protection of schools and educational facilities from any form of attack or military use. These instruments underscore the importance of maintaining the neutrality of such institutions, explicitly prohibiting their direct targeting or conversion into military objectives. The Convention on the Rights of the Child obligates state parties to ensure children's right to education and to protect them from the adverse effects of armed conflict, including the safeguarding of schools as secure learning environments. This protection is further reinforced by the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which prohibits the use of educational facilities in ways that expose children to danger.

UN Security Council Resolutions provide an additional legal framework to reinforce this protection. The Resolution No. 1998 of 2011 highlights the importance of holding parties accountable when they violate children's right to education by targeting schools⁽¹⁰²⁾. Resolution No. 2143 of 2014 underscores the need to respect the legal protection of educational facilities and prevent their use in armed conflict. Most recently, Resolution No. 2601 of 2021 affirmed the urgent need to protect education during armed conflict and to ensure the continuity of the learning process in a safe environment⁽¹⁰³⁾.

At the national level, Yemen's legal framework also reflects this commitment to protecting educational institutions. The Yemeni Constitution enshrines education as a fundamental right for every citizen and obligates the state to provide a safe learning environment. The Yemeni Child Rights Law No. 45 of 2002 focuses on

101. Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, available at the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/mrxwtma2>

102. Resolution No. 1998 of 2011, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/mv7nfx35>

103. Resolution No. 2601 of 2021, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2na32prz>

protecting children from all forms of violations, including ensuring safe school environments⁽¹⁰⁴⁾.

In addition, other international legal instruments reinforce this protection, such as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which classifies the targeting or military use of educational institutions as a war crime warranting accountability. The Safe Schools Declaration also underscores the importance of ensuring that schools remain safe spaces, even during times of conflict.

Twenty-Seventh: Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 31 incidents of attacks on healthcare facilities and institutions. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 19 of these incidents, the internationally recognized government for 9, and the Southern Transitional Council for 3, reflecting a continued deterioration in compliance with international humanitarian laws that are designed to protect these vital facilities.



These violations included the misuse of hospitals and healthcare centers for purposes entirely unrelated to their core function of providing medical services. For example, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group conducted weapons training sessions

104. Yemeni Child Rights Law No. 45 of 2002, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/3m93wwba>

within these facilities— a blatant violation of international laws that stipulate the protection and neutrality of healthcare institutions as spaces exclusively dedicated to delivering medical care. Several hospitals and health centers were also subjected to repeated raids by armed forces affiliated with various conflict parties, leading to disruptions in their operations and provoking fear and instability among medical staff and patients. The violations extended further, with numerous doctors and nurses facing physical assaults, beatings, and direct threats from armed actors associated with the warring parties, severely undermining their ability to provide care and fostering a state of constant tension in these facilities.

These violations go beyond the mere destruction or disruption of healthcare services. They deny civilians access to essential medical care, further aggravating the suffering of the population and worsening the already dire humanitarian situation in Yemen.

Examples of Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions

“ On the morning of Saturday, February 3, 2024, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group converted the Mother and Child Hospital, located in Al-Jabbanah Al-Ulya neighborhood in the Old City, Al-Mashannah District, Ibb Governorate, into a venue for a cultural and military training course. The course lasted 17 days, with two-hour sessions each day, and was attended by 145 male staff members. A military police officer oversaw the training, during which participants received instruction on three types of weapons, under the pretext of preparing to repel any foreign invasion of Yemen. The training took place inside the hospital’s training hall, significantly disrupting the provision of medical and health services for patients who rely on the facility for care. This unlawful use of the hospital impeded patients’ access to necessary medical assistance, as hospital staff were preoccupied with attending the course. ”

A 49-year-old male hospital employee told Mwatana, “Every morning at 10:00 a.m., the training course organized by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group would begin at the Mother and Child Hospital in Ibb. The course lasted about two and a half hours daily for seventeen days. The first hour was dedicated to listening to speeches and lectures by the group’s leader, Abdulmalik Al-Houthi, while the second hour focused on military combat training.

In the first half of the course, the military training was theoretical, led by a military police officer who instructed participants on combat strategies, including how to set ambushes and build defensive fortifications. This phase also included explanations of various types of weapons and their uses.

In the second half, the first hour continued to feature lectures by the group's leader. In contrast, the second hour was dedicated to practical training on assembling and disassembling three types of weapons: the rifle, the 12.7mm machine gun, and the RPG launcher. Participants were divided into groups to carry out these exercises inside the hospital's training hall.

At the end of the course, participants were asked to fill out general mobilization forms and attach passport-sized photos (4x6 cm). They were informed that weapon permits or identification cards would be issued based on these forms.

A week after the course concluded, the participants were transported via rented buses, funded by the hospital, to Al-Mahmool area for live-fire exercises using the weapons they had been trained on theoretically.

Some participants expressed reluctance to attend the course but felt compelled due to fear of consequences, such as being transferred to Sa'dah Governorate for a similar course or losing their jobs, especially since the hospital provides a modest monthly stipend of 50,000 Yemeni Riyals for its staff, despite the suspension of official salaries. The course was justified as a measure to prepare staff to defend themselves in case of a U.S. or Israeli ground invasion of Yemen⁽¹⁰⁵⁾.

“ On the morning of Wednesday, August 2, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., the village of Ab'ar, located in Sabr Al-Mawadem District, Taiz Governorate, witnessed a new incident involving an attack on the Ab'ar Health Center. A group of soldiers affiliated with the internationally recognized government occupied the health center building, which had only recently been officially reopened after years of efforts to revive its operations. The center had initially been seized in January 2018. Since its reopening, it had begun providing essential medical services to the local community, including childhood vaccinations, treatment for seasonal illnesses, and maternal care—making it a lifeline for many families in this underserved area. ”

105. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Al-Mashannah district of Ibb governorate on March 13, 2024.



“

Fifty-five workers lost their livelihoods,
and ten thousand people lost their right
to treatment. We had hoped the center
would be reactivated if another
epidemic struck, but today,
it stands as a military barracks.

”

A 27-year-old male eyewitness from the village of Ab'ar stated, "The Ab'ar Health Center in Sabr Al-Mawadem District used to be a lifeline for local residents before it became a flashpoint in the conflict. It was shut down during the 2018 clashes between the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group and the internationally recognized government. After the government regained control of the village, the center was repurposed as a residence for soldiers, ceasing all medical services. In August 2023, the center reopened with the support of a humanitarian organization and resumed its medical services, including vaccinations, various treatments, and laboratory services. It operated with a medical team of ten staff members, including two female health workers tasked with providing house-to-house childhood vaccinations."

The witness noted that community engagement was strong and that the vaccination teams encountered no significant obstacles. However, despite the center's reopening, one apartment in the single-story building remained occupied by soldiers, who refused to vacate. This presence hindered the organization's plans to expand support in early 2024, ultimately resulting in reduced services. The witness reported that the organization was forced to reduce its staff to four nurses and two female health workers, severely affecting the quality of healthcare services.

The witness emphasized that the Ab'ar Health Center offered its services free of charge and had a positive impact on improving living conditions in the village. However, with support from the humanitarian organization halted, residents have increasingly felt the burden of the absence of these now-essential services. He added that the continued presence of soldiers and their refusal to leave threatens further deterioration of healthcare provision, painting a grim picture for villagers who lack any viable alternatives⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

“ On Monday, July 1, 2024, at approximately 10:00 a.m., forces from the 4th Resistance Brigade, led by Awsan Al-Sha'ari and affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council, occupied the Health Isolation Center in Al-Bardah area, Radfan District, Lahj Governorate. The forces used the center as a training base, causing the complete suspension of its operations and depriving an estimated 10,000 residents of medical services. As of the date this incident was documented, the center remains occupied⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ . ”

106. An interview conducted by Mwatana for Human Rights with a local resident in Salah district of Taiz governorate on June 26, 2024.

107. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Radfan district of Lahj governorate on October 21, 2024.

A local witness stated, “In Radfan, the Health Isolation Center—which saved our lives at the height of COVID—has now become a military training ground. The emergency rooms, laboratories, ventilators... all fell silent, replaced by the sounds of military drills.”

He added, “Fifty-five workers lost their livelihoods, and ten thousand people lost their right to treatment. We had hoped the center would be reactivated if another epidemic struck, but today, it stands as a military barracks.”

Twenty-Eighth: The Legal Framework Governing Attacks on Healthcare Facilities and Institutions

Hospitals and health centers enjoy special protection under international humanitarian law and human rights law. Any infringement on these facilities constitutes a grave violation that warrants accountability before national or international courts. The 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocol II enshrine the principle of protecting hospitals and medical facilities designated for the care of the wounded and sick, strictly prohibiting attacks on them or their use for military purposes⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. This principle aligns with the obligation to distinguish between military objectives and civilian objects, a cornerstone of international humanitarian law aimed at preventing indiscriminate attacks that may target healthcare facilities or convert them into military objectives.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court reinforces this protection by classifying attacks on hospitals and health facilities not used for military purposes as war crimes. This is further supported by United Nations resolutions, such as Security Council Resolution 2286 (2016), which explicitly condemns attacks on medical facilities and calls for the respect of their neutrality and the provision of protection⁽¹⁰⁹⁾.

At the national level in Yemen, the Yemeni Constitution guarantees the right to health as a fundamental right for every citizen, emphasizing the state’s obligation to provide healthcare services to all, especially during times of crisis. The Yemeni Penal Code criminalizes attacks on civilian facilities, including hospitals, and imposes penalties for disrupting the delivery of essential services to the population. Additionally, the Yemeni Child Rights Law reinforces the obligation to provide

108. Geneva Conventions, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/3w2baksc>

109. Resolution 2286 (2016), available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/4epv8h4s>

healthcare for children and to protect them from harm—an obligation that places a clear responsibility on all parties to the conflict to ensure the safety of healthcare facilities.

Despite these legal safeguards, hospitals and health centers in conflict zones face numerous challenges, most notably their conversion into military sites, the absence of accountability, and the ongoing impunity for perpetrators. These violations underscore the urgent need to strengthen compliance with international and domestic laws to protect health facilities and ensure the continuity of their humanitarian services—especially in conflicts where civilian lives are constantly at risk.

Twenty-Ninth: Denial of Humanitarian Access

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 63 incidents of obstruction and restriction of humanitarian aid access in Yemen. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for 40 of these incidents, while the STC was responsible for 10, the internationally recognized government for 10, and the Joint Forces for 3 of the total documented cases.



Since the outbreak of conflict in Yemen, blockades and the obstruction of humanitarian assistance have been among the primary factors exacerbating the country's humanitarian crisis. Millions of Yemenis suffer from extreme poverty and hunger, struggling to access essential services such as healthcare, food, and education. Warring parties have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of humanitarian organizations, often making it difficult or impossible for aid to reach the areas most in need.

These restrictions have deprived countless impoverished and affected families of their right to receive aid. As documented by Mwatana, the methods used by conflicting parties to obstruct humanitarian assistance have varied. These include limiting the movement of aid and humanitarian workers; reducing aid quotas for beneficiaries, interfering with the distribution mechanisms, and manipulating or obstructing the preparation of beneficiary lists. Additionally, aid shipments have been seized by conflict parties and sometimes repurposed for political or military gain, thereby denying civilians their right to essential aid.

In some instances, humanitarian workers were physically threatened or prevented from performing their duties, making aid delivery even more difficult. This includes the 2024 campaign of arrests carried out by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group against humanitarian workers and international organizations—many of whom were directly involved in aid distribution.

Millions of civilians now face severe hunger due to a critical shortage of food, while children are particularly affected by acute malnutrition, placing them at risk of death or preventable diseases. Diseases such as cholera and measles have also spread widely due to the shortage of medicines and medical supplies.

Examples of Denial of Humanitarian Access Incidents

“ On Wednesday, June 26, 2024, at approximately 10:00 a.m., the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid in the Sha'arah area, at the entrance to Razih District, Sa'dah Governorate. A team from EBS Digital Company, consisting of three staff members, was stopped from entering the district. The team was on a mission to assess health projects funded by

international organizations, including UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and the World Health Organization. The purpose of the visit was to evaluate the quality of health services provided, including child nutrition programs benefiting around 1,500 households. The team was detained at a security checkpoint for approximately an hour and a half, during which their phones and laptops were thoroughly searched. They were also threatened with arrest and the imposition of multiple charges. After their devices were returned, they were forced to return to Sa'dah City without being able to complete their mission or carry out the planned assessment of the health projects. ■■

One team member (39 years old, male) told Mwatana, "We began the mission to assess the health centers in Razih District with the aim of adding beneficiaries and increasing the humanitarian assistance provided to those areas. Razih is one of the largest districts in Sa'dah and hosts large numbers of displaced people from other areas.

Our mission was to assess about seven health centers, but we were prevented from entering the district by a security checkpoint at its entrance. Our mobile phones and tablets were searched, we were detained for a period of time, and we were threatened with accusations of collaborating with intelligence agencies or the 'aggression countries', even though we were on a purely humanitarian mission.

What shocked us most were the soldiers' behavior — most of them were quite young and treated us with verbal aggression, threatening to arrest us unless we agreed to their conditions. At times, they claimed our permits were invalid, and at other times, they insisted we needed approval from the Security and Intelligence Service.

After hours of delay, we were forced to return to Sa'dah City around 3:00 p.m., and we were informed that we could not return until authorized by the relevant authorities⁽¹¹⁰⁾."

110. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Sa'dah district of Sa'dah governorate on July 13, 2024.

“ On Monday, January 1, 2024, around 8:00 a.m., in Al-Hazm District, Al-Jawf Governorate, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, through its Supreme Council for the Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, deprived approximately 1,800 households of cash assistance provided by IDRA Yemen. This occurred following the completion of the project’s first phase. The Supreme Council intervened to alter the beneficiary lists, adding names of individuals affiliated with the group, which led to the exclusion of eligible families. As a result of this interference, ADRA Yemen halted the project in Al-Hazm District. However, the project continued in Al-Motun District in the same governorate, despite ongoing Houthi interference in the beneficiary lists there as well⁽¹¹¹⁾. ”

“ On Saturday, January 20, 2024, around 10:30 a.m., in Al-Safari village, Sahar District, Sa’dah Governorate, the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group prevented the distribution of food aid provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross. The aid was designated for 1,500 beneficiaries with disabilities. However, 100 beneficiaries were denied access to their aid under the pretext that they were “not in need” — despite being disabled and listed in the official beneficiary database. The aid packages intended for them included oil, sugar, rice, tea, and lentils. ”

“ On Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at approximately 4:00 p.m., three armed members of the Special Security Forces affiliated with the internationally recognized government assaulted a team from the Al-Ard Al-Tayyiba Social Foundation, a humanitarian relief organization, while they were implementing a water supply project for the displaced persons’ camp in Bat’ha Al-Meel, located in Al-Wadi District, Marib Governorate. The team was prevented from completing the project as weapons were brandished in their faces, they were physically assaulted, and the media team’s equipment was looted. This attack led to a disruption in humanitarian operations in the camp and delayed urgently needed aid for displaced households. ”

111. An interview conducted by Mwatana with a member of the field committees in Al-Hazm district of Al-Jawf governorate on February 14, 2024.

A 46-year-old male eyewitness told Mwatana, “Three armed men in a military vehicle attacked the team from Al-Ard Al-Tayyiba Social Foundation at Bat’ha Al-Meel Camp, in Al-Wadi District, Marib Governorate. The team was on a humanitarian mission to implement a water supply project for the camp, which hosts numerous displaced persons. However, they were met with harsh treatment from the gunmen, who obstructed their work and prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Although the team had the necessary permits from the Executive Unit for IDP Camp Management in Marib, they were surprised by verbal assaults from the gunmen. The team’s vehicles were stopped, one of the drivers was beaten, weapons were pointed at the team, and the photographer’s camera was confiscated. Despite the team’s attempts to report the incident to the head of security and protection at the Executive Unit and other relevant authorities, there was no response, leaving the team at risk and depriving displaced persons of much-needed assistance under difficult conditions⁽¹¹²⁾.”

“ On Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at around 9:00 a.m., forces affiliated with the STC in the Bir Ali area, Rudum District, Shabwah Governorate, prevented the Small and Micro Enterprise Promotion Service (SMEPS) from distributing cash assistance for livestock support.

The organization was informed that the distribution would be postponed under the pretext of “verifying the beneficiary lists.” The forces then replaced the names of some beneficiary households with individuals loyal to the council. As a result, the organization halted the distribution, depriving 250 beneficiary households of support⁽¹¹³⁾ . ”

112. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Marib district of Marib governorate on March 27, 2024.

113 An interview conducted by Mwatana in Rudum district of Shabwah governorate on September 22, 2024.



“

The Vision of Hope International Organization used to distribute wheat to us, but now the checkpoints block them. The warehouse was moved elsewhere, and the organizations are afraid of shelling.

”

“ On Sunday, February 25, 2024, at approximately 8:00 a.m., at the Al-Qataba checkpoint in Al-Hudaydah Governorate, the Joint Forces on the western coast prevented staff from the Vision of Hope International Organization—which provides food aid—from entering Al-Tuhayta District. The staff were informed that the entry was denied due to the possibility of shelling by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, despite local residents asserting that the targeted villages were far from that area. As a result, the team was forced to return without visiting the area⁽¹¹⁴⁾. ”

A former beneficiary told Mwatana, “Even humanitarian aid hasn’t been spared. The Vision of Hope International Organization used to distribute wheat to us, but now the checkpoints block them. The warehouse was moved elsewhere, and the organizations are afraid of shelling.”

She added, “They shamelessly tell them: ‘You are not allowed to enter!’. No one cooperates with us. The organizations are afraid that the shelling will reach them the moment they arrive.”

She concluded, “These hardships only worsen our suffering. We gain nothing. We had hoped the war would end and the military would leave, but nothing is changing.”

Thirtieth: The Legal Framework on the Denial of Humanitarian Access

In the context of the ongoing conflict in Yemen, humanitarian aid continues to face significant challenges, despite the existence of both international and domestic legal frameworks designed to protect it and ensure its delivery to those in need. On the international level, international humanitarian law, which governs non-international armed conflicts, including the Geneva Conventions and their Protocols, affirms the necessity of protecting civilians and ensuring the safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance. In addition, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulates the right to adequate food and healthcare during times of conflict, aligning with fundamental United Nations principles such as humanity and neutrality.

114. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Al-Khokhah district of Al-Hudaydah governorate on February 25, 2024.

Domestically, the Yemeni Constitution holds state authorities responsible for ensuring citizens' fundamental rights under all circumstances, including during war and conflict. However, despite these legal obligations, the reality in Yemen is marked by severe obstructions. These include fragmented military control, interference with aid movement by conflicting parties, and attacks on humanitarian facilities, all of which hinder the delivery of aid to the most impoverished and vulnerable populations.

Thirty-First: Violations of Civic Space and Public Freedoms

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented 52 incidents of violations against public freedoms across various regions of Yemen, distributed as follows:

- 37 incidents of attacks on civic space
- 11 incidents of restrictions on freedom of movement
- 4 incidents targeting freedom of expression and the press.

Responsibility for these violations is attributed as follows:

- The internationally recognized government is responsible for 23 incidents
- The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group for 20 incidents
- The Southern Transitional Council (STC) for 7 incidents
- The Joint Forces for 2 incidents.

The attacks on civic space accounted for the majority of documented violations, with 37 incidents involving the prohibition of public events, restrictions on the work of civil society organizations, and the harassment of humanitarian and civil society workers.



Throughout the year, the warring parties—chief among them the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group—imposed severe restrictions on the operations of both local and international organizations. These included banning project implementation without strict security approvals, prohibiting peaceful assemblies, and labeling any unlicensed civil activity a security threat.

In areas under the control of the internationally recognized government, particularly in Marib Governorate, organizations faced exhausting bureaucratic pressures, including demands for additional permits and lengthy approval procedures. Some local organizations were shut down or had their activities impeded due to interference from security or military authorities.

Similarly, in areas controlled by the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council, Mwatana documented comparable violations, such as restrictions on civil events and bans on organizations from implementing their projects, further compounding the challenges faced by civil society and public freedoms.

In addition, 11 incidents of restrictions on freedom of movement were documented. These included the imposition of tight travel restrictions between governorates or into areas controlled by different conflict parties.

In Houthi-controlled areas, dense checkpoint networks were established, where civilians were subjected to interrogation and arrest, particularly during national holiday celebrations. Women were banned from traveling freely without a male guardian (mahram) and prohibited from checking into public hotels unless accompanied by one.

In areas under the control of the internationally recognized government, women faced similar restrictions, such as being required to submit additional documentation or witnesses to obtain identity papers or permission to travel. Women were also prohibited from staying in public hotels without a male guardian.

Regarding freedom of expression and the press, four incidents involving restrictions on these rights were documented. These included the persecution of journalists, bans on photography, and the withholding of information from media outlets. In areas under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, journalist Mohammed Shubaita, Secretary General of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate

in Sana'a, was shot and injured. Authorities in these areas have imposed strict limitations on media activity, with no opposition media outlets operating in their territory. There is also extensive blocking of local, Arab, regional, and international news websites, severely constricting press freedom.

Similar violations were observed in areas controlled by the internationally recognized government, where certain media outlets were banned from operating, and journalists were subjected to harassment and threats while attempting to report or cover events.

In STC-controlled areas, similar patterns emerged. Armed political factions stormed the building of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. In response to these developments, the Syndicate issued a statement expressing deep concern:

"The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate is following with grave concern the repressive measures against its branch in Aden and against union activities more broadly. Most recently, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor issued a directive suspending the activities of professional unions, foremost among them the Journalists Syndicate. These developments have been accompanied by incitement against union leaders in Aden, threats to their lives, and placing them in serious danger⁽¹¹⁵⁾."

These violations have resulted in a shrinking of civic space and the disruption of humanitarian organizations, civil society institutions, media outlets, and journalistic work. Restrictions on movement have exacerbated the suffering of vulnerable groups, particularly women and internally displaced persons (IDPs), who face daily struggles to access food and essential services.

The targeting of journalism and freedom of expression has deepened the media blackout, weakening the ability to shed light on ongoing violations and critical societal issues.

The escalation of these violations points to a serious deterioration in public freedoms and fundamental rights in Yemen. Civil liberties are no longer guaranteed rights for citizens but are instead subject to the shifting dynamics of military and

115. Statement by the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, available at the following link:
<https://tinyurl.com/ms5mue82>

political power. This has further complicated the country's humanitarian and political crises.

Given this alarming context, there is an urgent need to pressure all parties to respect basic rights and end violations that threaten the lives of millions of Yemenis. These circumstances demand immediate intervention by the international community and human rights organizations to hold conflicting parties accountable to their legal obligations, end attacks on civic space, and guarantee the rights of Yemenis to express themselves, move freely, and live with dignity and freedom.

Examples of Violations of Civic Space and Public Freedoms by Parties to the Conflict

1. Examples of Violations Committed by the Internationally Recognized Government

“ On the morning of Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at around 9:00 a.m., in the Al-Mujamma area, City District, Marib Governorate, a 30-year-old displaced woman was subjected to a violation of her civil rights by the Marib branch of the Civil Status and Civil Registration Authority, affiliated with the internationally recognized government. She was denied a national ID card despite submitting all the required documents, on the grounds that she did not have a male guardian (mahram) present at the time of application. This measure constitutes a violation of a woman's right to access official documentation and reflects the broader obstacles faced by women—particularly displaced women—in realizing their civil rights. ”

The 30-year-old woman told Mwatana, “I am displaced from Taiz Governorate and currently live in Marib with my husband and daughters. I have a basic education certificate and am a housewife. My husband works in a freelance business and commutes between Seiyun in Haddramaut and Marib.

In 2023, I enrolled in a pastry training program organized by an international organization. After graduating, I received a grant and initial support to start a small business producing sweets and baked goods. This success motivated me to further develop myself by applying to additional training programs.

When I applied to study with another organization, my application was rejected because I didn't have a national ID card. Since then, I've been trying to obtain one. I submitted all the required documents, including my exam seat number for the basic education certificate, a signed reference letter from the neighborhood chief stamped by the local police station, and statements from two witnesses.

Despite fulfilling all the requirements, I faced a barrier due to the condition that a mahram (husband or brother) must sign the application form. I tried to use my nephew as a mahram, but the request was denied. I visited the Civil Status Office in Marib more than three times, yet I have been unable to obtain the ID card due to the absence of my husband, who works far away in Hadhramaut.

I currently live alone with my daughters because of my husband's work conditions. I see this requirement as a major obstacle to exercising my right to obtain a national ID card—something that is fundamental to facilitating both my daily life and professional activities⁽¹¹⁶⁾.

“ On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at approximately 10:00 a.m., in the Al-Mujamma area, Marib City District, Marib Governorate, a 27-year-old woman was denied the issuance of a passport by the Immigration and Passport Authority – Marib Branch. Her application was rejected on the grounds that she did not have a male guardian (mahram) accompanying her when she came to apply for the passport, which obstructed the processing of her application. Although the law allows her to obtain a passport without the need for a guardian or male escort, her request was still denied⁽¹¹⁷⁾. ”

116. An interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Marib city district of Marib governorate on March 25, 2024.

117. In interview conducted by Mwatana's team in Marib city district of Marib governorate on June 3, 2024.



“

I never imagined that a joyful day would turn into a nightmare. Behind the very walls I had filled with love and peace, and in front of everyone, I was assaulted in a horrifying scene unlike anything I've witnessed before.

”

“ On the evening of Saturday, July 20, 2024, at around 7:30 p.m., an incident involving a violation of freedoms took place at Green City Park, located in the Al-Mujamma area, Marib City District, Marib Governorate. Members of the Police Protection and Facilities Guard Forces in Marib assaulted a 32-year-old media professional and cartoonist while he was attempting to enter a public festival with one of his fellow journalists. His colleague was denied entry without any clear justification, seemingly to prevent media professionals from gathering together. When the cartoonist objected, he was physically assaulted by the security personnel. After the intervention of bystanders, he was eventually allowed to enter. Once the event ended, the same security personnel assaulted him again with rifle butts once.

Following the incident, the victim shared the details on his Facebook page, sparking widespread public outrage and turning the case into a matter of public concern. ”

The victim told Mwatana, “I work as a cartoonist for several media outlets, and I’ve also worked as a project coordinator for a number of media organizations. Recently, I was involved in painting murals on the walls of Green City Park—artwork meant to bring joy and hope to many displaced people in this city who are suffering under the weight of war and economic hardship. I saw this as a form of communication—a language of coexistence and peace, which we have been sorely missing throughout these years of war.

I never imagined that a joyful day would turn into a nightmare. Behind the very walls I had filled with love and peace, and in front of everyone, I was assaulted in a horrifying scene unlike anything I’ve witnessed before. The security forces didn’t stop there—they tracked me down toward the end of the event, stormed the festival stage, and assaulted me again, with the same brutality, right there on the platform.

This incident caused severe psychological distress to me and my family, who were standing by my side during the attack. We had never seen a soldier assault a civilian in front of his family before—but it happened to me. It left me in an extremely difficult and dehumanizing situation⁽¹¹⁸⁾.”

118. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Marib city district of Marib governorate on August 5, 2024.

“ On Wednesday, June 26, 2024, at approximately 9:00 a.m., Facility Security Forces stationed at the Bilqis Hotel in the Al-Mujamma area, Marib City District, Marib Governorate, prevented the holding of an event marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, which was organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – Marib Branch. The hotel’s facility guards refused to allow the event to take place, citing the lack of a permit from the governorate’s operations room. They also barred entry to guests affiliated with local and international human rights organizations operating in Marib.

As a result, the OHCHR was forced to relocate the event to the Marib Girls Foundation, where materials were presented on the conditions of detainees and victims of enforced disappearance, along with ways to support them. This incident reflects the ongoing harassment faced by humanitarian and human rights organizations in Marib⁽¹¹⁹⁾. ”

2. Examples of Violations Committed by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) Group

“ On Monday, January 1, 2024, at approximately 1:30 p.m., in the Al-Haraj area of Al-Safiyah, Al-Safiyah District, Amanat Al-Asimah (Sana’a Capital Municipality), a 49-year-old male journalist was physically assaulted by three men in civilian clothing affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The attackers beat him severely with an iron rod, causing injuries that required him to be transferred abroad for medical treatment.

The journalist, who serves as the director of a radio station, had published a Facebook post expressing his objection to a court ruling that ordered the confiscation of his radio station. He accused the Ansar Allah group of seizing his privately owned outlet. The post attracted public attention and turned the assault into a contentious issue. It is worth noting that this was not the first such attack against journalists; similar assaults had occurred previously⁽¹²⁰⁾. ”

119. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Marib governorate on June 27, 2024.

120. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team in Al-Sabeen district of Sana’a governorate on January 16, 2024

“ On the evening of Friday, January 5, 2024, at around 7:00 p.m., in Al-Sabeen Square, near Al-Saleh Mosque (currently called Al-Shaab Mosque), in Al-Sabeen District, Amanat Al-Asimah (Sana’a Capital Municipality), a security officer affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group prevented photographers in the square from taking pictures of individuals with musical instruments.

The incident occurred when a 27-year-old man asked a photographer to take pictures of him and his friends with an oud (traditional lute). The photographer refused, explaining that a security official had issued prior instructions banning such images. This decision upset the young people present, who viewed it as a restriction on personal freedoms and freedom of expression. ”

Ammar Ali, (27-year-old— pseudonym) said, “I wanted to take a photo with the oud and the guitar, but the photographer told us: ‘It’s forbidden to photograph you with musical instruments. This is an official directive, and please don’t get me into trouble with the Ansar.’ When I objected and expressed my surprise, he said these were orders that couldn’t be disobeyed. Since that day, I’ve stopped going to Al-Sabeen Square⁽¹²¹⁾.”

“ On Saturday, April 27, 2024, at approximately 10:55 a.m., on Stadium Street in Dhamar City District, Dhamar Governorate, a 45-year-old journalist was threatened with imprisonment by a security and intelligence officer affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group, due to his posts on social media. It is worth noting that the journalist had previously been interrogated by the local branch of the Security and Intelligence Service on August 14, 2022, during which he was forced to sign a pledge committing to cease publishing and writing. His posts were labeled as “incitement against the regime and the state.” ”

The journalist told Mwatana, “One day, while I was in the market area, I encountered an officer from the Security and Intelligence Service. He issued me a direct threat, saying I would be imprisoned if I did not stop writing on social media and criticizing the policies of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The officer escalated the threat, speaking in a harsh tone: ‘I swear a solemn oath—on divorce—that I will imprison you if you continue writing and criticizing the group’s authority.’

121. An interview conducted by Mwatana’s team with a young man on February 23, 2024.

He added that there were directives from Sana'a to arrest me, and that he was ready to carry out those orders if I didn't 'come to my senses,' as he put it. Then, in a mocking and demeaning tone, he said: 'We know you're not connected to anyone abroad. You're vulnerable, without protection, without a tribe or political party to support you or follow up if you get arrested.'

Despite these threats, I replied clearly: 'The law guarantees me the right to express my opinion. If you want to take me to prison now, I am ready.' But from his tone and behavior, it was evident that there was a serious intention to harm or detain me. On August 13, 2022, I had previously received a threat from the governor of the province, involving imprisonment and liquidation. Then, on August 14, 2022, I was summoned by the local Security and Intelligence branch. During the interrogation, they forced me to sign a pledge not to publish or write again, claiming that my posts were inciting against the regime and the state⁽¹²²⁾.

3. Examples of Violations by the Southern Transitional Council

“ On Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at approximately 9:40 a.m., security forces affiliated with the Southern STC stormed a peaceful sit-in in the Sixtieth neighborhood of Ghayl Ba Wazir, Hadhramaut Governorate. Around 15 security personnel, dressed in patterned blue uniforms and carrying automatic weapons, arrived in three vehicles. One of the officers fired into the air, causing students from the Saeed Ba Wazir Secondary School and other nearby schools—who were protesting the deteriorating electricity service—to disperse. ”

No injuries among the students were reported. However, later that evening, the forces arrested more than ten students and forced their parents to sign pledges committing not to participate in any future demonstrations. Additionally, some of the students had their heads forcibly shaved⁽¹²³⁾.

122. An interview conducted by Mwatana for Human Rights with a journalist in Dhamar city, Dhamar governorate, on March 3, 2024.

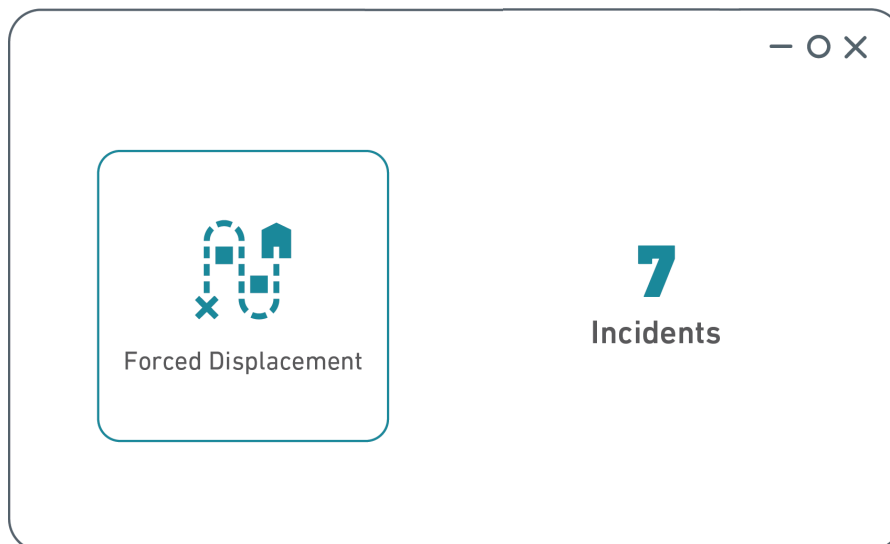
123. An interview conducted by Mwatana for Human Rights with a journalist in Dhamar city, Dhamar governorate, on March 3, 2024.

“ On Sunday, February 4, 2024, at around 5:00 a.m., a military force from the Seventh Brigade of the Southern Resistance, along with units from the Shabwah Defense Forces—both affiliated with the STC—launched a military raid on the sit-in camp in the Al-Aqla area, Jordan District, Shabwah Governorate. ”

The operation, involving dozens of military vehicles and armored personnel carriers, had set out from Ataq City on the evening of February 3 and began shelling the sit-in camp in the morning. No injuries were reported. The demonstrators had been demanding a reduction and unification of fuel prices and the provision of basic services in the governorate⁽¹²⁴⁾.

Thirty-Second: Forced Displacement

Mwatana for Human Rights documented seven incidents of forced displacement, which led to the displacement of eight civilians, including three children and one woman. The Ansar Allah (Houthi) group was responsible for five incidents, while the internationally recognized government was responsible for one, and the STC was also responsible for one incident.



124. An interview conducted by Mwatana in Ataq district of Shabwah governorate on February 8, 2024.

Examples of Forced Displacement

“ On the morning of Sunday, March 4, 2024, at around 10:00 a.m., Sana’a Governorate witnessed an incident of forced displacement targeting two Ethiopian migrants, aged between 20 and 23, by members affiliated with the Ansar Allah (Houthi) group. The migrants were residing temporarily in the area while seeking employment opportunities in preparation for eventual travel to Saudi Arabia. They were detained by three armed soldiers in a military vehicle, then forcibly transferred to a local prison where they were held alongside 16 other migrants in harsh conditions.

The two victims remained detained until March 9, 2024, after which they were forcibly deported aboard a truck carrying 90 other migrants. They were offloaded in Souq al-Ithnayn (Monday Market) in Al-Qubaytah District, Lahj Governorate, and forced to continue south toward Aden without any assistance. Aden, under the control of STC forces, has witnessed increasing violations against migrants, placing them at further risk. ”

Thirty-Third: Legal Framework on Forced Displacement

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of their state. Article 13 affirms this fundamental right, promoting individuals’ freedom to choose where they live and move without unjustified restrictions. Article 14 of the same declaration recognizes the right of every person to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries if subjected to persecution, underscoring the commitment to protect individuals from oppressive practices that endanger their lives and dignity⁽¹²⁵⁾.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) further emphasizes in Article 12 that freedom of movement, including the right to leave any country and return to one’s own, may not be restricted except where such restrictions are legally established and necessary under the law. This provision highlights the importance of protecting individuals from arbitrary interference with their right to movement⁽¹²⁶⁾.

125. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, available at the following link:
<https://www.un.org/ar/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

126. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), available at the following link:
<https://tinyurl.com/5dc5n2cw>

Under International Humanitarian Law, Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention strictly prohibits the forcible transfer or deportation of protected persons—whether individually or en masse—from occupied territory to any other territory, unless such actions are necessary for the persons' safety. The First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, in Article 85(4), defines the forcible transfer of persons without a lawful basis as a grave breach of IHL, categorizing it as a serious crime that necessitates accountability.

The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol reaffirm in Article 33 the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the expulsion or return of refugees or asylum seekers to countries where they risk persecution or threats to their life. This principle is a cornerstone of international refugee protection⁽¹²⁷⁾.

In International Criminal Law, forced displacement constitutes a grave violation. Under Article 7(1)(d) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, forced displacement is classified as a crime against humanity if committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population. This provision affirms that any such act carried out as part of a policy targeting civilians warrants prosecution and accountability.

In summary, these legal provisions underscore that forced displacement not only violates fundamental human rights but also constitutes a serious crime, requiring the international community to take decisive measures to prevent such acts and hold perpetrators accountable.

Thirty-Fourth: Terrorist Bombings

In 2024, Mwatana for Human Rights documented one incident of a terrorist bombing, which occurred in Abyan Governorate and targeted a school that had been converted into a military base by STC forces. Terrorist groups were responsible for the attack.

127. Refugee Convention, available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/5ek9xdpj>



Example of Terrorist Bombings

“ On Friday, August 16, 2024, at approximately 6:00 a.m., in the village of Al-Fareedh, Madiyah District, Abyan Governorate, a terrorist bombing targeted Al-Fareedh School. The attack was carried out by Al-Qaeda/Ansar al-Sharia, when a suicide bomber driving a 2007 Hyundai Santa Fe packed with explosives detonated the vehicle at the school.

The massive explosion resulted in the killing and injuring of soldiers who were inside the school building. It also caused the complete destruction of the school’s main gate, three water tanks, and five bathrooms, as well as partial destruction of the school fence and six classrooms.

It is worth noting that STC forces had occupied the school building since early 2023, using it as a command, logistics, and supply center. This occupation permanently disrupted educational services, denying 183 students their right to education and preventing 12 teachers (male and female) from carrying out their teaching duties. ”

03

CHAPTER THREE

Recommendations

To All Parties to the Conflict

1. Immediately cease unlawful attacks against civilians and adhere to the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.
2. Facilitate safe, rapid, and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid and relief workers to all Yemeni governorates.
3. Respect international human rights law, including cultural, economic, and social rights, and uphold commitments under relevant international human rights treaties.
4. Close unlawful detention centers, immediately release those arbitrarily detained, disclose the fate of those forcibly disappeared, investigate incidents of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in detention centers, and ensure a healthy and humane environment for detainees facing criminal charges.
5. Immediately stop the recruitment and use of children in the armed conflict in Yemen, demobilize all child recruits without delay, and take necessary measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society.
6. Take all necessary steps to end and prevent sexual violence, investigate violations, and hold perpetrators accountable.
7. Cease targeting civilian objects and indiscriminate attacks likely to damage civilian infrastructure, especially critical facilities.
8. End attacks on health and educational facilities, stop their use for military purposes, and demilitarize them completely.
9. Respect human rights principles related to freedom of movement, expression, peaceful assembly, and all forms of public and fundamental freedoms.
10. Cease the planting of landmines and explosive devices of all types, clear contaminated areas, and take protective measures for civilians such as marking hazardous areas, providing maps of minefields, and other actions until full clearance is achieved.
10. Conduct impartial and transparent investigations into serious violations and grave crimes committed by their commanders and personnel, hold those responsible to account, and ensure comprehensive redress for civilian victims.

To the Ansar Allah (Houthi) Group

1. Immediately cease indiscriminate attacks and the targeting of individuals and civilian objects. Stop using explosive devices in all their forms that endanger civilian lives.
2. End the arbitrary detention of civilians without a legal basis, disclose the fate of those forcibly disappeared, immediately cease torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment, provide adequate and humane detention conditions for those facing criminal charges, allow regular humanitarian access to detainees, and shut down informal detention centers.
3. Permit independent humanitarian access to individuals and households in greatest need, and stop arbitrary interference in the delivery, distribution, or beneficiary targeting of humanitarian aid, and all other forms of interference that hinder aid access.
4. Provide the necessary facilitation and support to international organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance to affected and impoverished households in areas under their control.
5. Commit to ending the use of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, provide maps of mined areas to support demining efforts, prevent harm to civilians, and install warning signs in areas contaminated with mines and other explosive devices.
6. Immediately cease the use of schools and other vital infrastructure, commit to keeping the education sector neutral, and refrain from militarizing or exploiting it for their own purposes.
7. Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into gender-based violations, including sexual violence, hold perpetrators accountable, provide effective reporting mechanisms, and take measures to reduce such violations.
8. Carry out independent investigations into violations committed by their forces and affiliated personnel, hold those responsible accountable, and provide redress to victims.
9. Immediately stop recruiting and using children in the armed conflict in Yemen, demobilize all child recruits without delay, and take the necessary steps to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society.

To the Internationally Recognized Government

1. Immediately cease indiscriminate attacks and the targeting of individuals and civilian objects, and refrain from using explosive devices in all their forms, which endanger civilian lives.
2. Immediately end the arbitrary detention and torture of civilians and all other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Disclose the fate of those subjected to enforced disappearance. Ensure healthy and appropriate detention conditions for individuals facing criminal charges, and grant international agencies safe, rapid, and regular access to detention centers.
3. Conduct transparent investigations into serious violations against civilians, hold perpetrators accountable, and compensate victims.
4. Ensure the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid and refrain from all forms of arbitrary interference that might prevent, restrict, or delay humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries.
5. Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into gender-based violations, including sexual violence; hold perpetrators accountable; establish effective mechanisms for reporting such violations; and take the necessary measures to reduce their occurrence.
6. Cease attacks on health and educational facilities, refrain from using them for military purposes, and remove any signs of militarization.
7. Immediately stop recruiting and using children in the armed conflict in Yemen, demobilize all child recruits without delay, and take the necessary steps to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society.

To the Southern Transitional Council (STC)

1. Immediately cease indiscriminate attacks and the targeting of individuals and civilian objects, and refrain from using explosive devices in all their forms, which endanger civilian lives.
2. Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into gender-based violations, including sexual violence; hold perpetrators accountable; establish effective mechanisms for reporting such violations; and take the necessary measures to reduce their occurrence.
3. Shut down unofficial detention facilities, immediately end the arbitrary detention and torture of civilians, and all other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Disclose the fate of those subjected to enforced disappearance. Ensure healthy and appropriate detention conditions for individuals facing criminal charges, and grant international agencies safe, rapid, and regular access to detention centers.
4. Ensure the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, and refrain from all forms of arbitrary interference that might prevent, restrict, or delay humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries.
5. Cease attacks on health and educational facilities, refrain from using them for military purposes, and remove any signs of militarization.
6. Immediately stop recruiting and using children in the armed conflict in Yemen, demobilize all child recruits without delay, and take the necessary steps to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society.

To the Saudi/UAE-Led Coalition

1. Conduct credible, impartial, and transparent investigations into violations of laws protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen.
2. Immediately halt indiscriminate and unlawful attacks within Yemeni territory that harm civilians and civilian objects, including hospitals, markets, and homes, and adhere to the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law: distinction, proportionality, and precaution.
3. End torture and other abusive and inhuman treatment in coalition-run detention centers across Yemen, and facilitate safe, rapid, and regular access for international agencies to these facilities.
4. Provide prompt and adequate remedies to victims and their families for deaths, injuries, and property damage resulting from unlawful attacks, and adopt a unified, accessible, and comprehensive compensation mechanism for victims.

To the Joint Forces

1. Immediately cease indiscriminate attacks and the targeting of individuals and civilian objects, and refrain from using explosive devices in all their forms, which endanger civilian lives.
2. Immediately end the arbitrary detention and torture of civilians and all other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Disclose the fate of those subjected to enforced disappearance. Ensure healthy and appropriate detention conditions for individuals facing criminal charges, and grant international agencies safe, rapid, and regular access to detention centers.
3. Conduct transparent investigations into serious violations against civilians, hold perpetrators accountable, and compensate victims.
4. Ensure the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid and refrain from all forms of arbitrary interference that might prevent, restrict, or delay humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries.
5. Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into gender-based violations, including sexual violence; hold perpetrators accountable; establish effective mechanisms for reporting such violations; and take the necessary measures to reduce their occurrence.
6. Cease attacks on health and educational facilities, refrain from using them for military purposes, and remove any signs of militarization.
7. Immediately stop recruiting and using children in the armed conflict in Yemen, demobilize all child recruits without delay, and take the necessary steps to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society.

To United Nations Member States

1. Support efforts to end hostilities in Yemen, achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace, ensure accountability for violations and serious crimes in Yemen, and prioritize human rights issues in any future peace processes.
2. Take effective steps to de-escalate the conflict in Yemen and the broader region, and work toward ending the prevailing culture of impunity.
3. Establish an international criminal mechanism to investigate human rights violations in Yemen, including serious violations committed by Israeli forces and the U.S.-U.K.-led coalition (Operation Prosperity Guardian) during their recent operations in Yemen.
4. Support independent civil society organizations to strengthen their capacity to monitor and document violations and abuses committed in Yemen.

To the United Nations Human Rights Council

- Establish an international investigative mechanism to identify those responsible for alleged gross violations and related crimes, with the aim of ensuring full accountability for perpetrators and delivering justice and redress for civilian victims.

To the United Nations Security Council

1. Utilize the tools at the Council's disposal, including imposing sanctions on individuals or entities responsible for attacks against civilians, where appropriate under existing authorities, to press for the full and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, and to support the political process as the only viable path to ending the armed conflict in Yemen. Human rights issues must be prioritized in any future peace efforts.
2. Emphasize the human rights dimensions of the conflict in Yemen and ensure that those responsible for the most serious crimes are not granted impunity.
3. Direct the Secretary-General to publish a complete and accurate list of perpetrators in the annual report on Children and Armed Conflict.
4. Refer the human rights situation in Yemen to the International Criminal Court to ensure comprehensive criminal accountability and redress for victims.

To Civil Society Organizations

- Establish an independent investigative and reporting mechanism comprising both local and international independent civil society organizations, dedicated to uncovering and documenting violations and abuses committed in Yemen.

Acknowledgments

This report, in its Arabic and English versions, was produced through the collaborative efforts of a team of researchers and lawyers from Mwatana's Research and Legal Support Units. Various other units and departments within the organization contributed to its development.

The report underwent several levels of review by the organization's management and relevant units. The Media and Communications Unit at Mwatana handled the design and publication processes.

Mwatana extends its heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to everyone involved in producing this report, especially the witnesses, survivors, victims' families, healthcare workers, activists, and other contributors who provided the information and data that formed the substance of this report. Gratitude is also extended to all the organization's supporters, partners, allies, and advocates. Mwatana also expresses its appreciation to the field researchers, lawyers, and other contributors who played essential roles in documenting and verifying the information in this report.

Mwatana calls upon all parties to the conflict in Yemen, the UN envoy to Yemen, the European Union, UN bodies and agencies, UN Security Council member states, all other stakeholders in the international community, local and international civil society organizations, media outlets, researchers, and advocates to consider the contents, findings, and recommendations of this report and previous annual reports when addressing the situation in Yemen. Human rights issues should be a focus and priority of all peace plans, programs, and any forthcoming transitional processes to ensure justice, accountability for perpetrators, and redress for victims.

Bloody Gambles

Human Rights Situation in Yemen 2024

Mwatana for Human Rights presents, in its eighth annual report, **Bloody Gambles** highlighting the abuses committed by various parties to the conflict, including the Ansar Allah group (Houthi), the Southern Transitional Council (STC), the internationally recognized government, the joint forces on the western coast, Saudi/UAE-led coalition, as well as the American-British coalition and Israeli forces during 2024.

The report covers the violations that the Mwatana for Human Rights team, consisting of researchers and lawyers, was able to access and document, and it does not cover the total violations that occurred throughout the year. The documented violations presented in the report demonstrate a blatant disregard for the rules and principles of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and applicable national legislation by various parties to the conflict.

The report highlights the human rights situation in Yemen for the year 2024 and the ongoing suffering experienced by the civilian population at various levels since the outbreak of the armed conflict in September 2014, as well as the atrocities they have faced over more than a decade of conflict.

The report calls on the parties to the conflict in Yemen to adhere to the rules and principles of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and applicable national legislation, to immediately cease various violations, and to conduct reliable and transparent investigations into violations of international laws and abuses against civilians. It also urges the provision of prompt and adequate remedies for victims and their families. It also urges UN member states to support peace efforts and to prioritize human rights issues, accountability for perpetrators, ensuring that justice for victims will be secured when planning peace programs and any forthcoming transitional processes. The report advocates for the establishment of a criminal justice -focused mechanism to investigate human rights violations, including potential international crimes.