



**Organisation Internationale pour les pays les moins avancés (OIPMA)  
The International Organization for the LDCs (IOLDCs)**

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Geneva, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020

To the Members of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen.

Please find attached the following two reports submitted by our partner, the Civil Network for Media Development and Human Rights, which consists of 12 non-governmental organizations based in Aden, Yemen, and present throughout the southern governorates.

The International Organization for the Least Developed Countries (IOLDCs) expresses its deep concerns about the issues raised in the comprehensive reports of the Group of Eminent Experts, A/HRC/42/17 followed by A/HRC/45/6 on Yemen, as well as the allegations contained in paragraphs 270-271 of report A/HRC/42/CRP.1.

The detailed findings covered the period of 2014-2019 and included allegations against the UAE and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), including other southern forces, such as the Security Belt Forces, the Hadrami and Shabwani Elite forces, and the counterterrorist forces. These allegations include secret prisons, acts of torture, enforced disappearances, and mass rape of detainees in Aden and Hadramout, particularly in the Bir Ahmed and the Al-Mansoura Central prison.

As these allegations are based on “reasonable grounds to believe” and not evidence accessed directly by the Group of Experts, the IOLDCs requested the Civil Network for Media, Development and Human Rights as a partner based in Aden to confirm these allegations on the ground.

The Civil Network undertook this task and formed a fact-finding team. It coordinated with the relevant security authorities to facilitate the Team's visits to the prisons, aiming at identifying the reality of these prisons and whether they complied with humanitarian and health standards.

As a result, the network's fact-finding team conducted interviews with the various concerned authorities and within the prisons, and sent the results of its investigations to the IOLDCs in order to be submitted to the concerned UN bodies.

The IOLDCs believes that the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen should be the primary recipient of the results of the investigations conducted by the Civil Network for Media, Development and Human Right.

Indeed, the attached reports prove that the allegations mentioned in reports A/HRC/42/17 and A/HRC/45/6, as well as report A/HRC/42/CRP.1 paragraphs 270-271 on Yemen are fabricated and politically motivated by activists who belong to the Islah party (Muslim Brotherhood), thus misleading the Eminent Group of Experts, especially since no official visit has ever been conducted in Yemen.

Therefore, the IOLDCs recommends the Group of Eminent Experts to review these allegations.

## **THE CIVIL NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATES ALLEGATIONS REGARDING ABUSES AND SECRET PRISONS IN ADEN**

This report is submitted in light of the A/HRC/45/6 comprehensive report of Eminent International Group and Regional Experts on Yemen, in which they highlighted incidents and patterns of conduct since September 2014, for the period of 2014-2019, and detailed results on allegations, based on "reasonable grounds to believe," such as the allegations directed at Emirates and southern forces, especially Security Belt, Hadrami and Shabwani elites and counterterrorism forces.

The report spoke of allegations of torture, enforced disappearance and mass rape of detainees in secret prisons in Aden and Hadramout, especially in Bir Ahmed Prison 2 and Mansoura Central Prison.

Accordingly, and after reviewing the report, the Civil Network, following its mission to focus on human rights issues due to professional and ethical responsibility, worked to form a fact-finding team and follow-up process procedures to facilitate the task of team's visits to prisons in coordination with the competent security authorities, with the aim of identifying the reality of prisons, the extent of adherence to humanitarian standards by those in charge – officials and relevant authorities – and to ensure the validity of the allegations and accusations mentioned in the report. The team was consisted of the following:

- Dr.Mahmood Shaief, Director of the Network;
- Mahmood Nasr, Coordinator of the Network;
- Kamal Saleh, Head of Media Section in the Network.

The team was able to visit the following targeted facilities:

- On 24/12/2019, the headquarters of the Security Belt Forces in Al-Sha'ab City, and met with a number of security and military leaders.
- On the same day, the Aden Police Command in Khor Maksar, and met with the Deputy Director, Brigadier General Abu Bakr Jabr, and Colonel Abulkhleq Al-Yafei, Director of the Legal Department.
- On 25/12/2019, Mansoura Central Prison.
- On 27/12/2019, Bir Ahmed Prison in Al-Sha'ab City.
- On 31/12/2019, the Police Command of Lahej province, and met with the director Major General/ Saleh Al-Sayed.
- On 1/01/2020, the central prison, criminal investigation prison, and anti-terrorism prison in the Lahj governorate.

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- On 7/1/2020, the Appeals Court in Aden, and met with its chairman, Judge/ Fahim Al-Hadrami.
- On 9/1/2020, the Appellate Prosecution Office in Aden, and met with its chairman, attorney Qaher Mustafa.
- The headquarters of Transitional Council, and met with lawyer Niran Suqi, member of presidency of STC, responsible for human rights issues.

### **1. Visit to the Headquarters of the Security Belt Forces:**

On 24/12/2019, the team went to Al-Shaeb city and met with a number of responsible security leaders of the Security Belt Forces, including colonel Majed Al-Tawil, Director of Legal affairs. We asked them about the nature of the forces' work and what they think about the accusations leveled against the Security Belt regarding secret prisons, acts of torture and rapes in prisons.

Colonel Majed Al-Tawil denied that any of that had happened, because the Security Belt Forces do not have any prisons at all, their role is limited to assist security authorities to fix and stabilize the security situation in Aden, and usually do this at the request of the police services. The forces hand over the people arrested to police stations which will take legal actions; therefore they do not have any secret or public prisons.

[The interview is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s17pvslmecw&feature=youtu.be>]

### **2. Visit to Bir Ahmed prison**

The team went to the Bir Ahmed Central Prison in Al-Sha`b city and met with prison's director Colonel Ghassan Abdel Bari. There, the team conducted dozens of individual and group interviews with prison inmates, and asked the prison director to provide a general picture of the prison, the nature of security and legal measures followed, the conditions of the prisoners, the prison's affiliation, supervision and the responsible authorities on it. In addition, the team asked him about the accusations, mentioned in the report of the international experts' group, such as secret prisons, torture, gang rape, and ill-treatment.

Colonel Ghassan Abdel Bari said: "It is regrettable that such allegations are reported from an international party, which is supposed to be keener on investigating accuracy, ensuring the validity of the information they receive and the credibility of bodies that provide them with." He said, "We absolutely deny these allegations and claims, and we have evidence that what we say is true."

He added: "Many human rights organizations have been brought to prison, for example, but not limited to, Red Cross Organization, which has been visiting us periodically and continuously since 2018, where they were allowed to enter and meet inmates, without restriction or supervision for a period of 4 days in each visit or the program prepared by them. This confirms that there is nothing to be afraid of or to hide".

Regarding secret prisons, he said: “Ironically, these are yellowish stories confirming the validity of what we are saying. The group relied on sources and conclusions that are not credible and dishonest; science today has evolved: they can find out about the secret prisons, whether they are above or below the ground, via satellites or any technologies they have or by sending experts on the ground.” He added that, “At the very least, this can be described as embarrassing, and whoever has the slightest doubt should kindly visit the prison to find out the truth as it is and not as it is depicted by others from afar.” He said confidently, “I challenge the authors of such reports to prove that they came to Bir Ahmed prison and they documented such violations, and we are ready to take legal responsibility.”

[The interview is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmUUUtKBtSY>]

### **3. Visit to Al-Mansoura Central Prison**

The results of the team’s visit to Mansoura Central Prison and the meetings it had with the Director General of the Prison and the inmates indicate that the prison is in a good condition and is well equipped in terms of treatment of inmates, cleanliness, availability of services and health care, sports, such as football and volleyball and providing meals on time.

The Director General of the Prison, Colonel Naqib Al-Yahri, says that the situation of the prison now differs from what it was in the past and that it is legally subject to direct supervision by the Public Prosecution and the judiciary, and what is being circulated as allegations of secret prisons and violations are nothing but false and fake rumors. He said that a number of organizations have already been brought to the prison and they witnessed for themselves the reality of the prison’s situation; “they sat with the prisoners, who responded autonomously, and refuted these allegations, and you can verify this on your own.”

He added that they are in the process of converting the prison into a reformatory for vocational rehabilitation and education. And one can visit the prison; meet the prisoners, and visit the rehabilitation workshops, educational halls, and equipment, to ensure that this is true.

The Network’s team went around the wards and sections of the prison and met a large number of prisoners, and asked them about ill-treatment in the prison, and whether they were subjected to torture or rape. All of those we asked answered in the negative and that they were receiving respectful treatment by the prison administration, but they complained about the delays in their cases in the courts, and some of them said that they have been in prison for more than one or two years, and their charges have not yet been decided by the court.

[The interview is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJEdL6jaxJI&feature=youtu.be>]

#### **4. Visit to the Headquarters of Police Command in Khour Maksar**

On 24/12/2019, the network's team visited headquarters of the police command in Aden province and met with the Deputy Director of police, Brigadier General Abu Bakr Jabr, and with the Director of the Legal Department, Mr. Abdul Khaleq Al-Yafei. They were asked about the reality of the violations, i.e. the torture and gang rapes of the detainees in secret prisons mentioned in the report, and about the truth of arrests, raids of homes and deportations of northern citizens carried out by the police services, and outside the scope of the law.

##### **4.1. Meeting with Brigadier General Abu Bakr Jabr, Deputy Director of police**

Brigadier General Jabr says that, "The accusations included in the report are untrue, we categorically deny them, and come within the framework of targeting and distorting the role of security and the Security Belt Forces. We are a party that knows the law very well and our measures are taken according to the law."

He said: "I do not blame the party that issued the report, but rather the parties that conveyed this wrong and inaccurate information to them. The team should have come here and verify the validity of these accusations at the time, but this did not happen." He added, "Yes, we may have make mistakes due to the conditions of the country, the war, the lack of capabilities and the cadre, and because of the multiplicity, conflict and duplication of tasks between more than one side. But we are working hard to fight terrorism and establish security: for this you will find some affected local parties working to incite the Management of Security and abuse it." With regard to the arrests he said, "we follow legal procedures issued by judicial authorities, and we do not initiate any arbitrary measures or arrests outside the scope of the law. For what regards the accusation of racism and that we are targeting northern citizens, this is absolutely incorrect and not true. There is no motive to use such illegal and immoral methods, we know who are the parties behind these accusations that fall within the framework of distortion and abuse, and we assure all people that we treat all with equality, the necessary procedures are followed, whether someone is southern or northern, and you or any party can verify this."

When we asked him about the reasons for delays in the judiciary and failures to decide on judgment cases for prisoners for long periods, he replied, "This is an important point, and we do not deny this. But this is the responsibility of the judiciary and it is not within the jurisdiction of the security; competent authorities must oblige the judiciary to decide on cases of the accused. There are thousands of files concerning prisoners that have been referred to the prosecution from our side, and we hope that they will be taken care of by the judiciary".

[The interview is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kc835dmwYAo>]

##### **4.2. Meeting with Mr. Abdul Khaleq Al-Yafei, Director of the Legal Department**

The team also met with the director of the legal department at the police services in Aden command, Mr. Abdul Khaleq Al-Yafei, who says that, "What international experts have reported on arbitrary arrests are incorrect allegations. Measures are taken

and take place in accordance with the law, powers of the judicial control officer and police authority, as well as orders from the Public Prosecution.”

He added, "There are some circumstances in which legal measures must be taken against any person who has committed a crime and is being tracked down and taking legal aid for arrest. There is no doubt that in such cases and by judicial orders, especially in cases of witnessed crimes, security has the right to raid the place or residence of the criminal or the accused, As for what is being alleged, that this is taking place involuntarily and outside the scope of the law, this is pure fabrication and a false allegation."

As for the delay in prisoners' cases, and what some prisoners complain about that they have been released by judicial orders and yet they are still being held, he replied, "This suffering is common, yet there is no prisoner without a case. But the delay results from slow judicial procedures because the judiciary understands and returns to the judicial authorities themselves. On our part, we urge the judiciary to work harder to address the issues of people and society".

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOVSYHKKIIE&feature=youtu.be>]

## **5. Visit to prisons in Lahj Province**

### **5.1. Meeting with Major General Saleh Al-Sayed, Director of Security for the Lahj Governorate**

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, the network's team visited prisons of the Lahej governorate, and met Major General Saleh Al-Sayed, director of security for the governorate, who welcomed the network's team and started fully preparing to facilitate its visits to all prisons without any complication. The team also met with Judge Adnan Mohammad, Head of Criminal Prosecution in Lahj Governorate Security; and conducted a number of meetings and interviews with prisoners, a number of administrators, and prison officials.

The team met Major General Saleh Al-Sayed and asked him first about the general condition of prisons in Lahej province, and how prisoners are being treated. What does he think about the accusations and allegations on the existence of secret prisons, torture, ill-treatment and other extra-legal detentions and kidnappings?

He answered by saying: "We are first and foremost a responsible security agency that fears God before anything else, we know our moral and human duties towards our society and towards our people. The law applies to everyone, anyone who makes mistakes will be held accountable according to the rule and the law."

“As for secret prisons, cases of torture and rape, they are false allegations and untrue talk. Our prisons are open to everyone and whoever has any doubts, since our prisons are open, they can come, visit the prisons, ask the prisoners themselves, and make sure of this reality. The purpose is clear, with the intention of distorting, offending and not searching for the truth, those who support and finance these organizations they benefit from their work.”

He added, "all prisons are subject to the Ministry of Interior and judicial authorities, whether the Central Prison, the Governorate Security Prison, or the Fifth Brigade Prison for Combating Terrorism, all of them are supervised by criminal prosecution. We go down to prisons on a weekly basis, files of prisoners are submitted to the prosecution and judicial authorities on a regular basis. As for issues of delaying prisoner rulings, this belongs to judicial authorities and it is within their jurisdiction. As for us as a security agency, our job is to detain, detain prisoners until their cases are decided by the courts, and the stay of prisoners for long periods represents a burden for us as we cannot provide their required protection, food and treatment in the absence of any support provided to us. On our part, we urge judicial authorities to exert a greater effort to decide on rulings and cases of prisoners. We also urge the responsible and relevant authorities to pay attention to the requirements and needs of prisons and inmates."

"We have many problems and shortcomings, we do not deny them, but this is due to a lack of capabilities and a lack of interest by the official authorities. Especially since these prisons have been destroyed in the war, they need to be rebuilt again, rehabilitated and fully equipped as facilities, needs and so on. Yet, we have worked through self-effort and with help of brothers in the UAE, so that some repairs and maintenances have been done, but this remains temporary."

"Unfortunately," he said, "no party supports us, not the government or others, not in terms of hygiene, treatment nor anything else. Even the food for prisoners is being provided at our expense."

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CeOxYOOZRU&feature=youtu.be>]

## **5.2. Meeting with Judge Adnan Mohammad, Head of Criminal Prosecution Office for the Lahj Governorate**

He says that, "we conduct daily and weekly field visits to monitor the conditions of prisoners. Indeed, we found that there are prisoners whose cases have been transferred and submitted to Public Prosecution, and yet their cases have not been decided in courts. We currently have files on charges and cases of prisoners from the Drug and Combating Terrorism departments; their files were submitted to the Public Prosecution Office. The truth is, during disembarkation process, we noticed a response and concern for prisoners' issues by the security command."

"Regarding those accused of terrorism, we worked to finalize their files; some of them have been released, and others have been under process."

"Recently, we visited central prison and found there 11 prisoners were ready, but there was a problem with the Public Prosecution in Aden; we contacted them to receive the files, but we do not know the reasons for the delay."

Regarding the reasons for delaying the consideration of prisoners' cases, he replied that, "The Public Prosecution of the Prisons Authority and Judicial Inspection in Lahej is the one who receives and inspects cases in general, whether they are criminal or terrorism cases. Each prosecution solves their cases: indeed, many cases have been

received. The only late cases are the cases belonging to the competent prosecution. As for the rest of cases, their files were received, filing orders were made, and some of them were released.”

“In general, some prison inmates are involved in criminal, terrorism and bombing cases, others are involved in land disputes and family problems.”

Regarding the mechanisms and procedures for detention, raid, and arrest of prisoners, he said, "The Public Prosecution has the authority to investigate and this authority is not exercised further than the use of criminal investigation procedures and by the anti-terror and riot forces. According to the type of charges, they verify it, and if a charge is proven, the files are referred to the court, if the person is acquitted, s/he will be released.

When we asked him about the causes of distress and overcrowding in prisons, the lack of hygiene in wards and bathrooms as compared to Bir Ahmed and Mansoura prison, which we found better equipped and clean, he replied: "The main problem we have is that the central prison was subjected to demolition and destruction in the recent events in the province. Now the process of rebuilding is taking place; it is possible that within two months it will be used, if it is ready, and prisoners will be transferred to it, because the current prison in Lahj, which is in fact we had to use, is the health services office."

"We know about the suffering and conditions of the prisoners, but this is a temporary situation imposed on us, and God willing, all of them are ready in two months, and this problem ends," he added.

When he was asked about the truth of the allegations and information contained in the experts' report about the arrests and disappearances of 40 persons carried out by the security services and the Belt during the recent events in Aden, he answered, "We heard such news and complaints. Indeed, we coordinated with the Security command, which responded and allowed us to go to inspect prisons. We searched files and met many inmates. The truth is that up to this moment we have not found anything of what is claimed, we did not receive any complaints about the existence of any case of disappearance, torture or extra-legal detention. You can visit prisons and meet prisoners yourself.”

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aioBUaMQuEU&feature=youtu.be>]

## **6. Visit to Court and Prosecution of Appeal in Aden**

### **6.1. Meeting with Judge Fahim Al-Hadrami, Chairman of Court of Appeal**

The network team met with Judge Fahim Al-Hadrami, Chairman of Court of Appeal in the capital, Aden. We asked him about the status of judiciary and courts, the reasons that prevent the judiciary to delay judgments and decide on prisoners' cases, and about the report of the international group of experts, i.e. on the existence of secret prisons in Aden and Hadramout, human rights violations committed by security services in those prisons, especially the Security Belts Forces and elites under direct supervision of Emirati officers, as claimed by the report. This includes cases of

torture, kidnapping of detainees and the mass rape of more than 200 detainees in those prisons.

He replied, "With regard to issues of judgments and examination of prisoners' files, this is jurisdiction of Public Prosecution Office, as it has authority and jurisdiction in the matter of inspecting prisons and initiating criminal cases. We in the Court of Appeal receive cases from the prosecution, and our task is only either conviction or innocence".

He added, "The reality of national judiciary is an honor for every citizen and every human being, who defends human rights in the world. The national judiciary works with all impartiality and believes in protecting and preserving human rights, and our Islamic law has taught us that."

"That is why you will find that no international organization is calling for the trial of Yemenis involved in criminal cases or cases of human rights violations by trying them internationally, and this is an honor and a medal on our hearts and for the judiciary in the capital, Aden."

He added, "The national judiciary has made a tremendous effort to protect and preserve human rights from any violations. We will not remain silent about anything to protect the rights of our citizens and protect social peace in these exceptional difficult circumstances, and we will continue to do so. As long as the national judiciary is respected by international organizations and the international community, we do not accept any interference in any matter by the judiciary, and no party has the right to raise such issues, and what we care about this to work in order to ensure and achieve the rule of law. God is above all of us."

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGBSW5uOaNk&feature=youtu.be>]

## **6.2. Meeting with Judge Qaher Mustafa, Head of Aden Appeals Prosecution Office, Former Head of National Committee for Investigation of Violations in Yemen**

When he was asked about the violations mentioned in the experts group's report, he responded, "We, as a judicial body, take our measures in accordance with the law in force in the country, and what was stated in the report of the international experts group are allegations of something that we do not know where they came from and what sources they relied on. As they did not visit us and did not come to sit with us, we did not hear any international organization that went to the sites required to be verified, and in order for their information to be certain, they were supposed to attend the judicial security services as the party we deal with in a sound and documented framework."

He added that, "Organs of judiciary, represented by courts and prosecution offices had begun their work from the very first moment after the liberation of Aden, in accordance with the laws in force and the codified legislation in force in the Republic."

He said, "All prisons, whether Mansoura Central Prison, Bir Ahmed Prison, temporary detention centers or what we call pre-trial detention at police stations, are under the complete supervision of the Public Prosecution Office. Prosecutors go into prisons and inspect them on a weekly basis, sometimes suddenly. We and the Attorney General go to Mansoura Prison and Bir Ahmed Prison, to all the prisons where the agenda of judiciary is practicing its work as national courts are the body responsible for all the cases before them."

"In any case, as you know, most of the sources of international organizations in matters of human rights depend on the media and on their own sources, and this is something that may be reliable or may be far from credible. Consequently, it is necessary to investigate and scrutinize, because this is a responsibility. As long as the national courts operate and perform their function, they are the first responsible party to look into any violations that occurs before them."

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7gHt5BTdVk&feature=youtu.be>]

### **7. Meeting with Lawyer Niran Suqi, in Charge of Human Rights Issues at the Southern Transitional Council**

In order to find out council's viewpoint on the accusations mentioned in the report, the network's team contacted the responsible for the human rights file and the leading member of the Transitional Council, Lawyer Niran Suqi, who responded to our questions by saying, "Unfortunately, the information and data stated in the report on which the group relied on was taken from unreliable parties, known for their hostility to directions of the Transitional Council."

She added, "We have seen the report and found that, unfortunately, it contains a huge amount of information and contradictory data, even dates and erroneous names, we hoped that the report would be transparent, more credible and a specialized fact-finding group had to go on the ground instead of relying on those sources. However, this did not happen, which raises many questions about credibility of the report and the group.

She said, "We in the council have sent an official response in which we refute all allegations in detail to the concerned authorities and the international group of experts. It is not only we, the Transitional Council, who denies the existence of secret prisons, but also the Ministry of Interior, formally, by the Deputy Minister of Interior, who is the first and last official. And this matter was announced and known in an official statement.

[The statement is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcYojHW-0-U&feature=youtu.be>]

There are also many local human rights organizations, which are independent and neutral organizations that went to prisons, other Arab and international organizations visited prisons, conducted direct field investigations and issued official reports and documented investigations. However, they were not contacted or approved by the international group, and this is strange."

On the issue of secret prisons, she said that, "It is a lie that some organizations affiliated with the Islah party (Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen) dealt with this, and it is unfortunate that the group relied on it. The group would rather have formed a committee to investigate the facts and go to those places that are alleged to have secret prisons."

She concluded, "we in the council have nothing to hide or fear, and we have confirmed this to all organizations that we visited or met up with. We welcome any party, and we will do all that is required to facilitate their work and verify the validity of those allegations on their own, and what is true, and will go to all prisons or any place they want to verify, not through reports issued remotely, and by adopting information from specific organizations and sources only, as some of them do not have a presence on the ground and operate from the capitals of foreign countries".

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIuzJVtAyLw&feature=youtu.be>]

### **8. Interviews with Prison Inmates**

The network team conducted dozens of interviews with prisoners in prisons. We asked them about the reasons for their imprisonment and the charges against them: how are they treated by those in charge of the prisons? What is the truth about torture and rape which some local reports and international organizations claim prisoners are subjected to? What are the most important problems they face in prison that detract from their rights?

The outcome of interviews with prisoners in general was that they are treated well by prison officials, according to the procedures and laws followed, and that most of the problems they face are the lack of speedy judgments by the courts, lack of wards, hygiene, water in many instances, power cuts for days and weeks and for long periods of time, other general problems and other problems that have become part of the situation people are accustomed to in the country in general.

Regarding our question about them being subjected to torture or gang rape, they all categorically denied the existence of any cases of torture or rape, and considered that our mere questioning is insulting and shameful, and that nothing of this sort happened nor did they hear such reports.

[The interview is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3vRMRDm5FQ&feature=youtu.be>]

### **Conclusions**

In light of the completion of the results of disembarkation and information reached by the team through field visits and direct interviews, whether with inmates, officials and those in charge of prisons, judicial authorities or relevant security and military leaders, we conclude the following:

- The issue of secret prisons is nothing more than a lie that some parties tried to exploit to deceive international organizations, and that the allegations contained in the report were arbitrary to reality, have nothing to do with the truth and have no basis of truth or proof. This is what was confirmed for us through the process of embarkation and field visits to all prisons in Aden and Lahj, meetings and interviews that the team conducted with prison officials and officials, with relevant security and judicial authorities, all of whom absolutely denied the existence of secret prisons and were surprised that such accusations were reported from an international party that had never visited Aden and did not go to the prisons or even communicated with those in charge. They confirmed that the group fell victim to its dependence on sources and entities that are not credible, suspected of their integrity and professional neutrality, that was according to their saying.
- All prisons are subjected to official authorities and the Ministry of Interior and are under direct supervision of the Public Prosecution. The Prosecution carries out visits and periodic inspections in a weekly and sometimes sudden basis. Allegations of having detainees due to political positions or disappearances are not true; all cases of arrest and detention take place either due to criminal charges that contradict the laws in force or against terrorist cases, violent crimes and vandalism against society, all inmates enjoy the same rights in accordance with the law.
- The team confirms that it has not received any complaints or reports of any cases of rape, arbitrary arrest, disappearance, detention, or torture. This is what security and judicial authorities have confirmed to us, they have not received any reports or complaints from victims, their families, activists or local human rights organizations, all prisoners enjoy their rights according to the law. Also, all prisoners we met categorically denied existence of any rape cases and considered that our mere questioning was insulting and shameful, that none of this had happened, and they have never heard of such gossip and rumors.
- Investigations conducted by the Network's team indicate that many local, Arab and international human rights organizations have already been in prisons and have spoken with inmates at different times during and after preparing the experts' report. And that there was no mention in their reports of such allegations and accusations.
- Results of investigations and interviews conducted by the team with prison inmates indicate that the most problems they face are the delay in deciding their cases by judiciary and courts, tight wards in some prisons, lack of hygiene, water supply in many times, and power cuts for days and weeks. This is for prisons in Lahej governorate. Instead, the Mansoura Prison and the Bir Ahmed Prison are well equipped and qualified.

**Recommendations:**

- The team recommends the administrators of prisons and public prosecutions to respect human rights standards and adhere to them when dealing with prisoners.
- The team recommends the responsible authorities in the Yemeni government, especially Ministry of Interior represented by Prisons Authority, to improve prisons' conditions and pay attention to them in terms of hygiene, food, water, electricity, and provide health, sports and entertainment services, and others.
- The team recommends the Ministry of Justice and the general attorney to play their role in implementing the laws and not violating the rights of the prisoners by directing courts of first grade and appeals, and the corresponding prosecutions to speed up litigation process and issuing judgments following accusation for each case.
- The team recommends local and international organizations to visit prisons and put pressure on judicial authorities to fulfill their duty as well as provide prisons' inmates with what is needed to preserve their humanity and dignity.

[The interview is available here:

<https://cnaden.com/2020/11/19/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b4%d8%a8%d9%83%d8%a9-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d8%af%d9%86%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d8%aa%d8%aa%d9%82%d8%b5%d9%89-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ad%d9%82%d8%a7%d8%a6%d9%82-%d8%ad%d9%88%d9%84-%d8%a3%d9%88%d8%b6%d8%a7/>

**To the International organization for the LDCs**

*Dear colleagues,*

*Please find attached a copy of our letter sent previously to the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violation of human rights and Obstructing the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination.*

*The Civil Network for Media, Development and Human Rights, which includes (12) non-governmental and non-profitable organizations\* would be grateful if you could submit our comments and arguments regarding the allegations mentioned in paragraph 270 -271 in the report of the detailed findings of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen\*\*A/HRC/42/CRP.1 to the concerned un bodies as follows:*

*Based on your inquiry about the correctness of information, that was reported in internet websites, about allegations, related to assassination attempt of Mr. Insaf Mayo. Despite our prior knowledge that these allegations are part of a media war, led by Islah Party (Muslim Brotherhood) in Yemen, we have responded to your request, we have searched and validated during the past days about these allegations, assassination attempt of the aforementioned on December 29, 2015. and reached to the following results:*

- 1. The issue have not been raised to the public prosecutor in Aden, but rather circulated on Islah Party`s websites , translated the content of the article, published by journalist (Aram Roston) on (BuzzFeed News) on October 16, 2018, in to Arabic, that is, three years after the alleged assassination attempt took place on December 29, 2015.*
- 2. Before this date, it was not discussed or talked about any attempt of assassination, except during a press conference held by the leadership of Islah Party in Aden on May 14th , 2017 , in which it revealed, what it said a process of attacking and burning the party`s headquarters in Aden on May 6, 2017, (that is, after nearly two years or more, from the alleged attempt in 29/12/2015) and this was in conjunction with a security operation carried*

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*out by anti-terrorist forces in Qaloua neighborhood (southwest of Aden) , in which large quantities of weapons, explosives, explosive belts, night telescopes an different types of foreign currencies were found in Al-Islah party, especially Qatari riyal and dollars , this was announced for public opinion and in various media means .*

- 3. It is clear from the content of the wording of the article published by Mr. (Arston) on (BuzzFeed News) that it is based on specific testimonies and information and it lacks credibility and clearly carries political backgrounds and motives for local entities and organizations, known for their loyalty and affiliation to islah Party and Muslim Brotherhood groups, supported by Qatar and Turkey such as (Yemen Youth Channel, Yemen Post, Suhail TV, Yemeni Scene and others).*
- 4. The content of the article, which was published by the (Buzzfeed.News) carries a lot of contradictory fabrications and gaps. This is evident by the way, in which presented video and confessions by those, who it was said, that they involved in the process, in suspiciously and fabricated way, it was mentioned Fake Paid Names, and this confirms that there are parties behind financing and publishing the report, it prompted the author and the website to publish and fabricate the events of the story, which was republished and translated into Arabic on the same sites, affiliated to Muslem Brotherhoods and Islah Party and widely in newspapers and social media.*
- 5. The main source of the allegations and information, adopted by the author of the story belongs to the protagonist (Abdullah Doubleh), a journalist, known for his affiliation to Islah party and program provider for the (Yemen Youth Channel) of the same party and lives on the move between Turkey and Doha, graduated from the (Hamzah Religious Institute for Qur'an) , one of (Abdul Karim Institutes Al-Zindanis`) institutes, in the city of (Al-Mokha) 2006 , he does not have any university degree, he imposed himself a lonely witness, narrator to the accident, which has been republished several times during the years 2019-2020, that is, after more than five years since the alleged accident has happened, this in itself puts more than a question mark?*
- 6. It is illogical for a country like United Arab Emirates to be so stupid of stupidity to carry out this process and mobilize all these forces and use the armored, tanks and drone aircrafts to take pictures from space, mobilize all this power and bring in a special commando`s squad from America, Israel and France to assassinate a person considered to be second-class leaders or third in Islah Party. does not represent any political, social or tribal weight, he moves freely without any personal guards, according to the statements of the Yemeni journalist Abdullah Doble himself, in a situation, in which Aden*

*lived in a state of chaos, semi-daily assassinations, car bombings and suicide bombers, especially in a period that followed the liberation of Aden, in a light of the collapse of state institutions, complete absence of the security, judicial, administrative, and other security services, where many investigations and evidence proved that the bombing and assassination operations were occurring frequently, at the time were nothing more than directed action by some terrorist elements and groups, such as Al Qaeda and ISIS, which role of it was identified with Islah Party, it was used in an attempt to exploit the state of vulnerability and security void, it revealed by many investigations carried out by the security services in Aden with a number of those, who were arrested in connection with the assassination and terrorist acts, especially the period between 2016 - 2018. They included documented confessions of unemployed youth and suspicious groups, whose poverty and living conditions were used to carry out these acts in exchange for small amounts of money not exceeding 200 to 300 USD for each An assassination case. We wonder here, is it not easier for the UAE or any other party to pay such a small amount to carry out such actions if we concede a narrative targeting (Insaf Mayo)?*

7. *It is important to note here that Mr. Salah Muslim Salem Batis is an extremist leader of the Islah party, journalist's companion (Abdullah Dobleh) in filing the complaint, he is a person suspected of having links to Al Qaeda, he sent his son (Muslim) in 2017 from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Hadramawt in southern Yemen to join al Qaeda. According to a press conference held by the governor of (Hadramout), (Major General Faraj Al-Bahsni) on October 11, 2018, revealed that "one of the accused in the terrorist cell admitted that (Muslim Salah Salem Batis), he was leading a terrorist cell of five terrorists in (Al-Masini valley), "before being killed in August 2018 in a US raid on a stronghold of al-Qaeda militants in Shabwa governorate.*
8. *It is worth noting here that the Network followed the work of the Human Rights Council last September and concluded that the report of the team of eminent experts was the subject of controversy and disagreement, between countries because it did not address human rights violations accurately, that it was based on allegations it built on information sources from unreliable bodies and organizations, remote investigations, that the team conducted it via the electronic space and social networking sites, and here is a sample, that is repeated in the alleged assassination of Islah's leader (Insaf Mayo) , in which it relied on activists and media outlets affiliated to Islah Party and Muslim Brotherhood, who are in Qatar and Turkey to provide the team with stories and narratives, driven, by enmity and political rivalries, including a novel Journalist (Abdullah Dobleh) during team's meeting with him outside Yemen, especially as the team stated that, according to the report, it was unable to visit Aden permanently, due to a refusal of the legitimate government to allow its members to visit Yemen. In addition, doubts that*

*many countries and organizations had during the session about the lack of credibility and impartiality of the chief expert (Tunisian nationality) due to his bias and brotherhood background.*

*9. There is a clear inconsistency in the timing of the alleged assassination attempt, between, what was reported in the BuzzFeed. New website, which claimed, that the assassination attempt took place on December 29, 2015 and what was stated in the eminent expert report, that we saw on the internet, article No. (270) specifies, that the alleged assassination attempt took place on October 29, 2015. ... Also, the security belt did not have any check points in the alleged area, until the events of August 2019, but there were points of the so called "Presidential Guard", belonged to legitimate government, as that area is closed to the presidential palace.*

*10. Accordingly, we would like to assure you that the fabrication of this narration was politically motivated and in the context of a media war led by the Muslim Brotherhood with support and funding from Turkey and Qatar, targeting the United Arab Emirates. (See photo of journalist Abdullah Dobleh, the first prosecutor from the right, next to the Emir of Qatar, the father.)*

*Finally, we draw your kind attention to the fact that the Civil Network for Media, Development and Human Rights in the capital, Aden, is about to finish preparing its annual report on human rights violations in Yemen in light of the ongoing war, and we also have other reports that we will provide you with, if you wish, especially since the Network is in contrary to human rights activists and some organizations that its hachers on both sides of the conflict (the legitimate government effectively led by the Islamic Islaah Party and Houthis), that it cannot misled international human rights bodies with false information, that serves this or that party to the conflict.*

*We are ready to answer any inquiry from your side.*

*Please accept my sincere greetings.*

*Dr. Mahmoud Shaif*

*Head of Civil Network for Media, Development and Human Rights*

*The capital of Aden*

*June 1, 2020*

*\*Network Members:*

1. *Haq Organization for Rights , Freedom& Defending Human Rights .*
2. *(4K) Foundation for Human Rights.*
3. *Socotra Center for Human Rights.*
4. *Al-Mahara Foundation for Human Works .*
5. *Sah Foundation for Human Rights.*
6. *Horeyia Foundation for Human Rights.*
7. *Yafea News Foundation for Media.*
8. *Al-Mustkabl Foundation for Security , Development and Building Peace.*
9. *Dalea Foundation for Media and Human Rights.*
10. *Aden Gulf Foundation for Human Development and Social Services.*
11. *Taka`a Foundation for Human Development.*
12. *The Democratic youth foundation*