



YEMEN: THE EXECUTION OF OPPONENTS

A Human Rights Report on the
Killing of Political Opposition,
2014-2024

HUMAN REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The history of Yemen, both distant and recent, is marked by a series of bloody conflicts and wars. These conflicts have been fueled by political, social, ideological and religious divisions, causing immense suffering among the Yemeni people. Furthermore, they have exacerbated existing divisions based on class, region, ethnicity and sect. These conflicts often serve the interests of foreign actors with overlapping goals and agendas.

Since the Zaidi imams assumed control of power in 898, their overthrow in 1962, the expulsion of the British colonizers from southern Yemen in 1967, the unification of Yemen between the north and south in 1990, and the Arab Spring revolution that ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh in 2011, Yemen has witnessed a series of assassinations of political leaders and symbols. Their forced absence from the political arena has significantly hindered the development of the republican system.

During the decade-long conflict between the government and the Houthi militia in northern and southern Yemen, assassinations and physical eliminations have re-emerged as criminal acts, reflecting extreme political violence against political, intellectual and religious opponents who have been killed for their opinions, affiliations or identities.

Throughout the recent period of conflict, the elimination of opponents took several forms, varying according to the parties responsible and their motives behind the crimes. These methods included the use of live bullets, explosives, vehicles, torture, sharp instruments, toxic materials and human shields. Such acts are part of the broader trend of authoritarian and extremist forces, who reject political action as a legitimate means of competition and refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of the people's vote as a democratic method and safe path for gaining or relinquishing power.

However, the current situation is more complex than before. In the past, Yemen's geography was divided between two legitimate authorities: one in the north and the other in the south. Today, it is disputed by four parties: the Internationally Recognized Legitimate Government, the Iran-backed Houthi militia, the armed formations outside the authority of the UAE-backed Legitimate Government, and Al-Qaeda, which occasionally operates in the south, center and east of the country. These internal conflicts have led to increasing dependence on external powers, turning local factions into tools of war for regional and international interests. Therefore, Yemen has devolved into a proxy war, where external actors utilize the conflict to advance their own agendas, increasing the risk of further escalation. This may lead to an increase in political violence, with opponents from Yemen's active national forces falling victim to various physically eliminating crimes.

REPORT METHODOLOGY

This report is one of the specialized qualitative reports, as it sheds light on an important and sensitive topic: the physical elimination of political opponents in Yemen. This is one of the most complex types of murders due to the ambiguity and vagueness surrounding it, which requires extra effort during the investigation and inquiry process. This process often takes a long time, especially if the perpetrator is an unknown party.

To develop and produce such investigative reports, we rely on extrapolating evidence, proofs, arguments and testimonies, after collecting data and information through recorded and written interviews, reports and field notes. We also incorporate quantitative and analytical approaches, especially when it's regarding statistical analysis and digital data.

The methodology for preparing this report is based on listing realistic policies, practices and evidence. These are then examined and explored in detail from both legal and human rights perspectives, based on the constitution in force in the Republic of Yemen, its national legislation and international treaties, agreements and global human rights charters ratified by the Yemeni government.

This report is based in form and content on a fixed methodology followed by the Rights Radar team. It involves a field monitoring and documentation process that meets internationally approved standards. This begins with collecting initial information from reliable sources or through receiving telephone or written reports, or from the organization's field-monitoring network spread across 20 Yemeni governorates.

Subsequently, a field research and investigation process is conducted to verify the accuracy and credibility of the collected information. This data is supported with documents, evidence and tangible proof that verify its authenticity, such as eyewitness statements, medical reports, death certificates of victims, and other official and unofficial documents.

A specialized team analyzes and reviews the information gathered by field monitors through questionnaire forms and recorded interviews. The data is entered into a comprehensive database, then sorted, analyzed and classified according to qualitative, geographical and temporal distributions of victims, incidents and responsible parties. This prepares the data for drafting the human rights report and producing its final technical version.

Furthermore, to ensure that all parties involved in committing such crimes are addressed, and in reaffirming our commitment to neutrality and objectivity, the statistical indicators are linked to a comprehensive database containing information about political victims who were eliminated in Yemen during the ongoing decade-long war. This data is managed with a transparent and verifiable auditing mechanism.

LEGAL ADAPTATION

Physical elimination, the extrajudicial killing of a political opponent, is a simplified version of 'political assassination', but is somewhat different from it. Political assassination often refers to the killing of rulers and typically involves an unknown perpetrator. In contrast, 'physical elimination' is used by ruling regimes and authoritarian powers who do not tolerate opposition. They resort to eliminating influential and effective opponents, whether individuals or groups, whom they cannot defeat through legitimate means..

The crimes of physical elimination of political opponents directly contradict the current Yemeni constitution, which guarantees all citizens the right to organize politically, professionally and in unions⁽¹⁾. It also ensures their freedom of thought and expression — whether by speech, writing or photography — within the limits of the law⁽²⁾. Furthermore, the constitution guarantees the right to voluntarily join any political organization in accordance with constitutional legitimacy⁽³⁾. The Yemeni Crimes and Penalties Law aligns with the constitution in prohibiting the killing of any individual outside the law and without a fair judicial trial. It stipulates the death penalty for perpetrators of premeditated murder and allows the death penalty as a discretionary punishment for those who kill an innocent person.

Additionally, the law considers criminal responsibility to be personal, stating that there can be no crime or punishment except by law, and that every accused individual is presumed innocent until proven guilty by a final judicial ruling⁽⁴⁾.

The physical elimination of political opponents constitutes a blatant attack on the right to life, which is the cornerstone of all other inherent and acquired human rights. This crime is criminalized by all international agreements, treaties and covenants, foremost among them being international humanitarian law, which prohibits such political crimes and rejects the justifications that perpetrators often use to legitimize their actions.

Article 3 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 prohibits “violence to life and person, including murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, and torture. The issuance of sentences and the carrying out of punishments without a legal trial that guarantees the necessary judicial safeguards.” Article 147 of the same convention classifies these acts as serious violations.

Meanwhile, Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, issued on 10 December 1948, confirms that “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, dated 16 December 1966, states that “every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.”

Furthermore, according to the first principle of the United Nations’ principles on the prevention of extrajudicial executions during times of war, “governments must legally prohibit all extrajudicial and arbitrary executions and ensure that such acts are criminalized as war crimes, in accordance with international law.”

(1) Article 58 of the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen (Chapter Two: Rights and Duties of Citizens)

(2) Article 48 of the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen (Chapter Two: Rights and Duties of Citizens)

(3) Article 5 of Law No. 66 of 1991 regarding Political Parties and Organizations

(4) Article 46 of the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen and Article 3 of the Crimes and Penalties Law No. 12 of 1994.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The “physical elimination” of opponents in Yemen has deep historical roots, tracing back to the era of Al-Hadi Yahya ibn Al-Hussein Al-Rassi (859-911), the founder of the Zaidi sect in Yemen. Al-Hadi Yahya perpetrated approximately 50 massacres against his opponents. The most brutal of these occurred when he ordered the mass execution of over 450 individuals in a single day. These individuals were crucified upside down on acacia trees in the village of Rahban, south of Sa’ada Governorate, where their bodies remained for four days.



THE PERIOD OF ZAIDI IMAM RULE IN YEMEN

The period of Zaidi Imam rule in Yemen, particularly that which was under Al-Hadi Yahya bin Al-Hussein Al-Rassi and his successors, witnessed a systematic and deliberate effort to physically eliminate political opponents to consolidate power. Following Al-Hadi's reign, his sons, Al-Murtada Muhammad and Al-Nasir Ahmad, continued this violent practice. This trend persisted through the third generation of Al-Hadi Al-Rassi's descendants, with the scope of physical eliminations expanding beyond the ruling family to include the general public. This escalation stemmed from internal power struggles among the sons of Imam Al-Nasir.

The conflict culminated in the rise of Al-Mansur Abdullah Hamza (1166-1217), who waged violent wars against those opposing his doctrine of limiting political authority to the clans of Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein. His opponents included the Sunni population of Yemen and Zaidi groups, such as Al-Mutarriyyah⁽¹⁾, who rejected this doctrine. During this period, an estimated 100,000 members of Al-Mutarriyyah group were reportedly subjected to physical elimination by Al-Mansur's followers in Sana'a within three days.

Yemen then descended into a period of chaos and collapse, with civil wars erupting across the country among various factions of the ruling family vying for power. This disorder continued until 1904 when Imam Yahya Muhammad Hamidaddin emerged as the leader, establishing the Mutawakkilite Kingdom. His rule began with the ruthless elimination of major political opponents, including his teachers and religious sheikhs, to solidify his authority.

(1) Al-Mutarriyyah was one of the Jarudi Zaidi sects in Yemen that emerged during the fifth and sixth centuries AH. In the early seventh century, the sect became the target of a systematic genocide by Imam Abdullah al-Hamza, who declared its followers to be infidels and permitted the shedding of their blood due to their differing opinions and beliefs.



Al-Mutarriyyah, who rejected this doctrine. During this period, an estimated 100,000 members of Al-Mutarriyyah group were reportedly subjected to physical elimination by Al-Mansur's followers in Sana'a within three days.



Imam Yahya announced the establishment of the (Mutawakkilite Kingdom), and inaugurated the period of his tyrannical rule by physically eliminating major opponents of the decision to choose him as imam, starting with his teachers and sheikhs.



Imam (Ahmed bin Yahya Hamid al-Din) assumed power after putting down the 1948 Constitutional Revolution, as a result of which his father was killed. He began his first act by executing 32 of the leaders of that revolution.

In early 1948, Imam Ahmad bin Yahya Hamidaddin assumed power following the suppression of the Constitutional Revolution, during which his father, Imam Yahya, was assassinated. Imam Ahmad's first actions included the execution of 32 revolutionary leaders, solidifying his reputation as the first to utilize the death penalty by sword as a tool for eliminating his political opponents. He also established special execution grounds on which to carry out these deadly acts. He continued to manipulate public opinion through mass mobilization, celebrating each killing as a means of maintaining control over Yemen.

THE PERIOD SUBSEQUENT TO THE SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER REVOLUTIONS

The war between the Republicans and the Royalists in North Yemen continued from 1962 to 1970, during which the physical elimination of opponents continued on both sides. However, the Republican movement was most affected by these eliminations, which reached their peak after the 1967 coup. This was due to the political differences between this movement, President Abdullah al-Sallal, the Egyptian regime that supported the Republican Revolution, as well as the ideological difference between the Republicans and the Imami Royalists, supported by Saudi Arabia.

In South Yemen, after three years of armed struggle against British colonial rule, independence was declared on November 30, 1967, and the state of South Yemen was established under the leadership of Qahtan Muhammad al-Shaabi. However, after only two and a half years, Qahtan Muhammad al-Shaabi was overthrown in a coup led by Salem Rubaya Ali, marking the beginning of a bloody struggle for power in South Yemen. Physical eliminations became the primary means of resolving conflicts among the various factions within the ruling party.



The educated, conscious, national Republican class, which differed (politically) from President Sallal and the Egyptian regime, and (ideologically) from the royalists and Saudi Arabia, was the most affected by these liquidations.



1972 The first war broke out between the two regimes in the two parts of Yemen, three months after (65) northern sheikhs were subjected to physical liquidation at the hands of the southern regime.



April 1973: (22) opponents of the (Salem Rabie) regime were liquidated following the bombing of a plane immediately after taking off from Shabwa Airport, carrying on board the victims who had been dismissed from the (Qahtan al-Shaabi) government.

In early September 1972, the first war broke out between the two ruling regimes of North and South Yemen. This occurred three months after the southern regime had executed 65 northern tribal sheikhs by inviting them to a meeting in a booby-trapped tent in Najd Al-Maqsar Village in Wadi Bayhan. The tent was blown up while the sheikhs were having lunch, marking the beginning of the conflict between the northern and southern regions.

On Monday, April 30, 1973, 22 opponents of Rubai were killed when a booby-trapped plane exploded as it took off from Ataq Airport, in Shabwah Governorate. The victims had been dismissed from the government of Qahtan Muhammad al-Shaabi and sent into political exile. They were summoned to attend a diplomatic conference in Aden and were traveling to Hadhramaut Governorate when the plane was blown up.

On Thursday, June 13, 1974, a military group calling itself the "Correction Movement" carried out a bloodless coup that overthrew the first civilian president of North Yemen, Judge Abdul Rahman Al-Iryani, replacing him with a military council led by Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim al-Hamdi. In October 1977, a dramatic physical elimination took place in the capital, Sana'a, when President Ibrahim al-Hamdi and his brother, military commander Abdullah al-Hamdi, were killed during a luncheon at the home of his deputy in the Leadership Council, Chief of Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Al-Ghashmi. Al-Ghashmi later became president following al-Hamdi's death.

In the same way that Al-Ghashmi ascended to power, he was also assassinated before completing the first year of his presidency. He was killed in an assassination attempt inside his office in Sana'a on June 24, 1978. At the time, suspicion fell on figures from the South Yemeni regime. This incident marked the beginning of a new chapter of armed conflict between the northern and southern regions, culminating in the 1979 border war and a series of mutual physical eliminations targeting political opponents in both parts of Yemen.



The so-called Correction Movement arose, which was established after a bloodless coup that overthrew the first civilian president of the Republic of Yemen (Judge Abdul Rahman Al-Eryani).



Less than two and a half months after he assumed power, Sanaa witnessed on the evening of Sunday, October 15, a coup attempt carried out by officers belonging to the (Nasserist) movement that supported the late President Al-Hamdi.



This was followed by a phase of front wars that the regime in southern Yemen exported to the northern regions, specifically the central regions



1986 The city of Aden, the capital of the regime in southern Yemen, witnessed the most horrific political massacre and the most horrific mass physical liquidation that targeted the party's senior leaders.

THE PERIOD OF RULE OF FORMER PRESIDENT ALI ABDULLAH SALEH

After the assassination of northern Yemen's President Ahmed Al-Ghashmi, Major Ali Abdullah Saleh mysteriously assumed the position of President of the Republic on July 17, 1978. Less than two and a half months later, on the evening of Sunday, October 15, a coup attempt was made against Saleh's authority in the northern capital, Sana'a. This attempt, carried out by officers from the Nasserist movement, who supported the late President Ibrahim al-Hamdi, was thwarted after the plot was uncovered. The immediate consequence was the execution of 21 Nasserist leaders, followed by a wave of physical eliminations targeting Nasserist figures and leftist forces. Many of those who were targeted remain missing to this day, and their families have not been able to obtain their bodies yet.

This was followed by the "front war", which the southern regime in Yemen exported to the northern regions, specifically the central governorates of Taiz, Ibb, Al Bayda, Dhamar and Raymah. The war continued from 1971 to 1983, involving four northern presidents, with Saleh's regime ultimately emerging victorious after three years of fierce battles that resulted in the physical elimination of more than 300 opponents from both sides.

In the mid-1980s, on the morning of Monday, January 13, 1986, the city of Aden, the capital of the southern regime, witnessed the most horrific mass physical elimination operation targeting senior members of the ruling regime. They were attending a political bureau meeting of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party, at the time. This massacre marked the culmination of two decades of intense conflict between the "progressive left" and "reactionary right" movements over power in southern Yemen, initially a political struggle that later turned into a regional conflict.



During the period (1991-1994), Yemen witnessed the escalation of disputes between the two unity partners, President (Ali Abdullah Saleh) and his deputy (Ali Salem Al-Beedh), (150) opponents from the Socialist Party were subjected to physical liquidation.



With the outbreak of the first spark of the Saada wars in June 2004 between the state and the Houthis group, "physical killings" returned to the forefront as a criminal act committed jointly by both sides of the conflict, in which some Hashemite political figures were killed inside the capital, Sana'a.



However, the poor performance of President Abd Rabbuh Hadi and the penetration of the previous regime to the top of the power pyramid and its control of the army led the country into a complex phase of conflict and political violence.

Following Yemeni unification in 1990 between the northern and southern regions, tensions between the unity partners — northern President Ali Abdullah Saleh and southern Vice President Ali Salem Al-Beidh — escalated between 1991 and 1994. During this period, Yemen witnessed around 150 assassinations of politicians, most of whom were from the Yemeni Socialist Party, which was part of the government. President Saleh was widely accused of being behind these assassinations, allegedly using extremist elements to carry out these physical eliminations, framing them as a conflict between socialists and extremist Islamists. This wave of violence continued even after the 1994 civil war.

During the first two decades of the unified Yemeni state, President Saleh employed physical eliminations as one of his primary security strategies to eliminate any significant political or military opponent who posed a threat to his regime. He often left behind traces pointing to Al-Qaeda in an effort to clear his own name. Among the victims of these physical eliminations were some key figures associated with his regime, the Socialist Party and the Houthi militia.

With the outbreak of the first Sa'dah war in June 2004 between the state and the Houthi militia, the practice of physical eliminations resurfaced, with both conflicting parties committing such acts. Political figures loyal to the Houthi militia were targeted, followed by tribal leaders and political figures loyal to the state who were in areas of Houthi territory. This practice continued even after the Houthis took full control of the capital, Sana'a.

On Friday, February 11, 2011, Yemen witnessed the eruption of the Youth Revolution, part of the broader wave of the Arab Spring. The revolution resulted in the overthrow of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, following a year of political crisis and popular demonstrations. During this period, Yemen experienced waves of violence, some of which escalated to the level of physical eliminations. Saleh regime was accused of being behind many of these physical eliminations, but the results of investigations into these incidents were never publicly disclosed, and trials related to them did not result in any concrete outcomes, leaving the perpetrators unknown.

THE PERIOD OF RULE OF FORMER PRESIDENT HADI

On Monday, February 25, 2012, President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi assumed the presidency of Yemen, following his victory in the consensual elections as the sole candidate. He succeeded President Saleh, according to the Gulf Initiative, which was designed to ensure a smooth transfer of power in Yemen. However, President Hadi's weak performance allowed the former regime, or what is commonly referred to as the "deep state", to penetrate the highest levels of power and maintain control over key institutions, particularly the army and security forces, which remained loyal to Saleh. This situation plunged Yemen into a complex phase of conflict and political violence.

As a result, the incidence of fatal physical eliminations in Yemen began to rise at an alarming rate, especially with the involvement of new and more deadly players —namely, the Houthi militia in the north and Al-Qaeda in the south. Both groups operate with extremist sectarian and religious ideologies, which justify their criminal actions against political opponents, leading to terrifying cases of physical elimination and widespread violence.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The “Rights Radar Human Rights” team documented a total of 953 cases of physical elimination committed by the conflicting parties in Yemen between September 21, 2014, and August 31, 2024. These physical eliminations were carried out for various motives, including political, sectarian, regional, ideological, economic and military reasons. Among the victims, 340 were aged between 18 and 30 years, 520 were of average age, and 93 were elderly individuals.



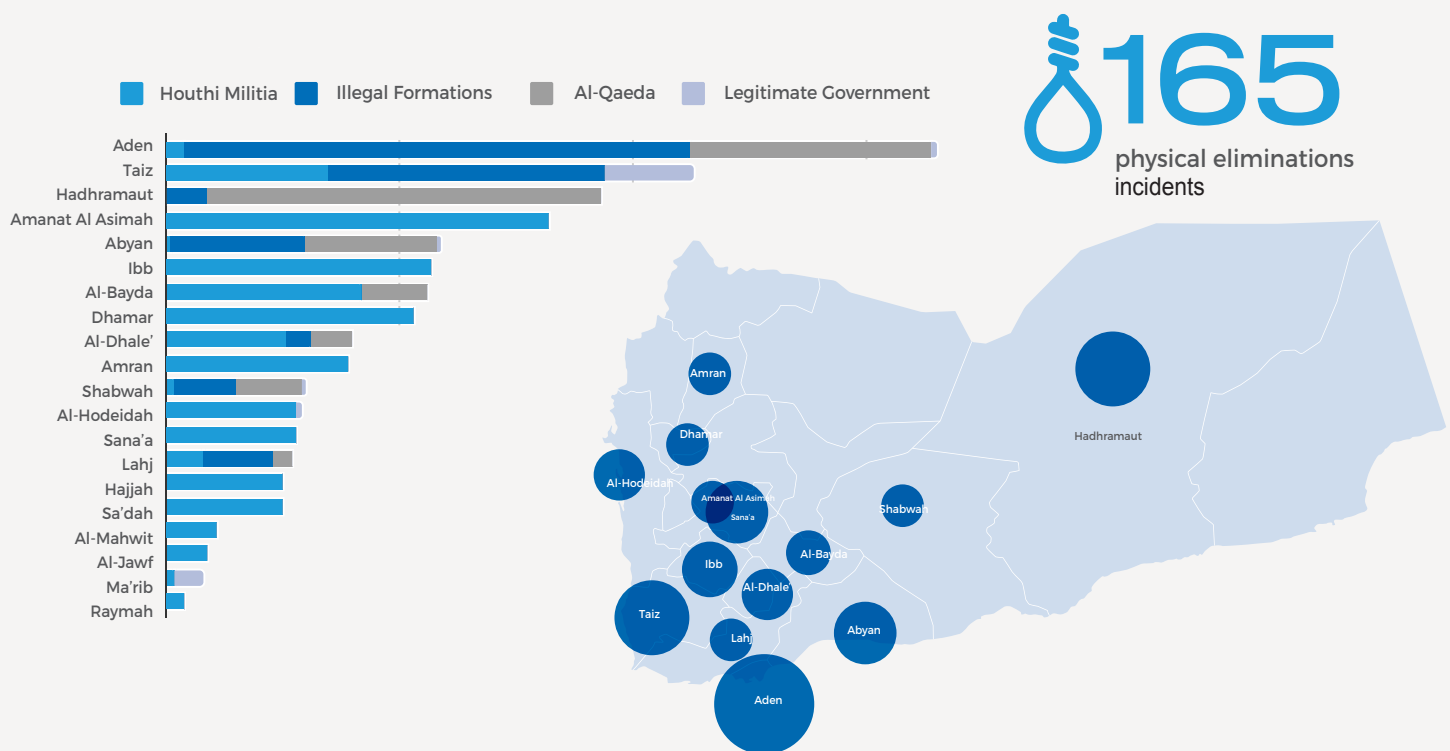
953

cases of physical liquidation committed by the parties to the conflict in Yemen against their opponents

During the period between (September 21, 2014 - August 31, 2024).

DISTRIBUTION BY GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The physical eliminations were spread across 20 Yemeni governorates, with most incidents (165) occurring in the temporary capital, Aden, where they were all documented. This was followed by Taiz Governorate with 113 incidents and Hadhramaut Governorate with 93 eliminations. These areas are characterized by disputes regarding power between the internationally recognized legitimate government and the security and military formations affiliated with the UAE in the southern governorates.



The capital, Sana'a, which is under the control of the Houthi militia, ranked fourth with 82 elimination incidents, marking a significant number for a single violating entity. Abyan Governorate followed with 59 cases, and Ibb Governorate recorded 57 incidents of physical eliminations, despite experiencing comparatively less political and military violence.

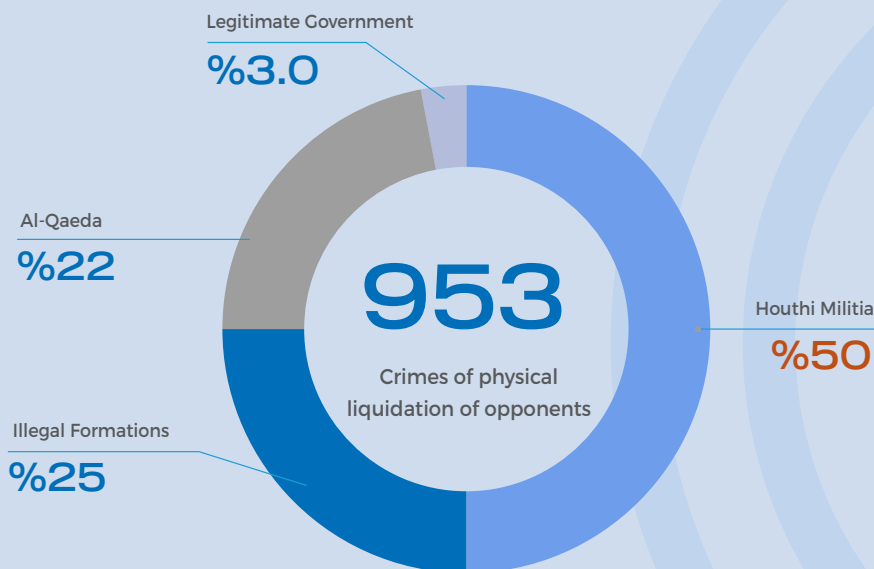
Al Bayda Governorate ranked seventh with 56 physical eliminations, followed by Dhamar Governorate with 53, Ad Dali' had 40 cases and Amran with 39 cases. Shabwah had 30 cases, while Hodeidah reported 29 cases. Sana'a Governorate followed with 28 cases, and southern Lahj Governorate recorded 27 cases. Hajjah and Sa'dah governorates each had 25 eliminations. The remaining incidents were distributed among the governorates of Al Jawf, Ma'rib and Raymah.

DISTRIBUTION BY PERPETRATOR

The Houthi militia ranked first among those responsible for committing physical eliminations of opponents in areas under their control and beyond, with a total of 481 incidents spread across 19 Yemeni governorates. The capital Sana'a, with 82 eliminations, had the most, followed by Ibb Governorate with 57 incidents, Dhamar Governorate had 53 cases, Al Bayda Governorate had 42 incidents, Amran Governorate had 39 cases, and both Hodeidah and Sana'a Governorates each had 28 eliminations.

Military formations outside the control of the legitimate government came in second place in the list of perpetrators with a total of 238 physical elimination incidents spread over seven governorates. The temporary government capital, Aden, had the highest number recorded in Yemen, with 108 cases committed by various groups. This was followed by Taiz Governorate, where Abu Al-Abbas Brigades, supported by the UAE, were responsible for 59 cases. Abyan Governorate followed with 29 incidents, Lahj with 15 cases, Shabwa with 13 and Hadhramaut had 9 physical eliminations.

Al-Qaeda was the third-largest perpetrator, who were responsible for 205 physical eliminations of its opponents, mostly ideologically motivated, distributed across seven Yemeni governorates. Hadhramaut Governorate topped the list with 84 eliminations, followed by Aden with 52, Abyan with 28, Al-Bayda and Shabwa with 14 each and Lahj with four physical eliminations.



481

The Houthi militia ranked first among those responsible for committing physical eliminations of opponents

The legitimate government ranked last among perpetrators, with the fewest cases of physical elimination of its opponents, totaling just 29 incidents spread over six governorates. Taiz Governorate had the highest number of cases with 19 cases, followed by Ma'rib with 6 cases. The remaining cases were distributed across Abyan, Aden, Shabwa and Hodeidah, with one physical elimination in each.

164

Al-Islah Party

the most targeted group
in documented physical
eliminations

163

**Members and activists
of the General People's
Congress**

(former President Ali Saleh's
party)

72

Southern Movement

which seeks separatism and is
represented by the Southern
Transitional Council (STC)

73 prisoners of conscience

48 prisoners of war

The rest of the documented
physical examinations were
distributed among (13) doctors
and academics

DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF VICTIMS

Through detailed classification and analysis of available victim data, it was found that political opponents from Al-Islah Party were the most targeted group in documented physical eliminations during the reporting period, with 164 assassinations. This was followed closely by members and activists of the General People's Congress (former President Ali Saleh's party), who experienced 163 physical eliminations. Members of the Yemeni Socialist Party were the next most-targeted group, with 27 incidents, followed by members of the Nasserite Party and the Salafi Rashad Party, each with 10.

In the southern governorates, members of the peaceful Southern Movement, which advocates for a federal state of regions, had the largest number of physical eliminations, with 72 of them. This was followed by the armed Southern Movement, which seeks separatism and is represented by the Southern Transitional Council (STC), with a total of 29 incidents. In the northern governorates, armed members of the Houthi militia were subjected to about 44 physical eliminations, many of which are believed to be related to internal factional conflicts within the group, often referred to as the "conflict of wings."

The Rights Radar team also documented 73 physical eliminations of prisoners of conscience, along with the physical elimination of 48 prisoners of war, most of whom were held in Houthi or Southern Transitional Council prisons. Additionally, there were 71 physical eliminations targeting tribal sheikhs for social reasons, 36 involving merchants and investors for economic reasons, and 30 religious men being targeted for political reasons.

Other victims included 13 doctors and academics, 11 media and human rights activists, and there were five individuals who were physically eliminated in the southern governorates due to their personal identity, based on their geographical affiliation with the northern governorates. Lastly, there were 147 physical eliminations that remained difficult to classify; all of these victims belonged to security and military institutions, and most of these incidents were committed by Al-Qaeda elements.

Distribution by Methods and Techniques of Physical Elimination

The methods and tools used to carry out physical eliminations against political opponents in Yemen varied during the reporting period,

starting with shooting with live ammunition. This was the most common method, employed in 640 opponents physically eliminated across 20 Yemeni governorates. The primary weapons included automatic machine guns (Kalashnikov) and silenced pistols. Taiz Governorate recorded the highest number of such murders, followed by Aden and Sana'a, the capital.



Physical elimination through various bombing operations came in second place, resulting in the deaths of 148 opponents across 16 governorates. Aden Governorate had the highest number of bombing-related killings, followed by Abyan, Hadhramaut and Sa'dah.

Torture leading to death claimed the lives of 92 opponents, with the majority of these incidents occurring in Sana'a and Aden.

Slaughtering operations with knives, carried out the way that the ISIS organization does, resulted in the deaths of 36 Yemeni opponents, primarily in Hadhramaut.



The Houthis were the only group to physically eliminate 13 Yemeni opponents by using them as human shields against strikes from Arab coalition aircraft in the governorates of Dhamar and Taiz. Additionally, 13 other opponents were eliminated by hanging, most of them in Dhamar and Taiz governorates. There were also run-over operations and deliberate traffic accidents that killed eight opponents in the governorates of Aden, Ibb, Al-Mahwit and Shabwa. Furthermore, three opponents were physically eliminated using poison in the governorates of Ibb and Dhamar.

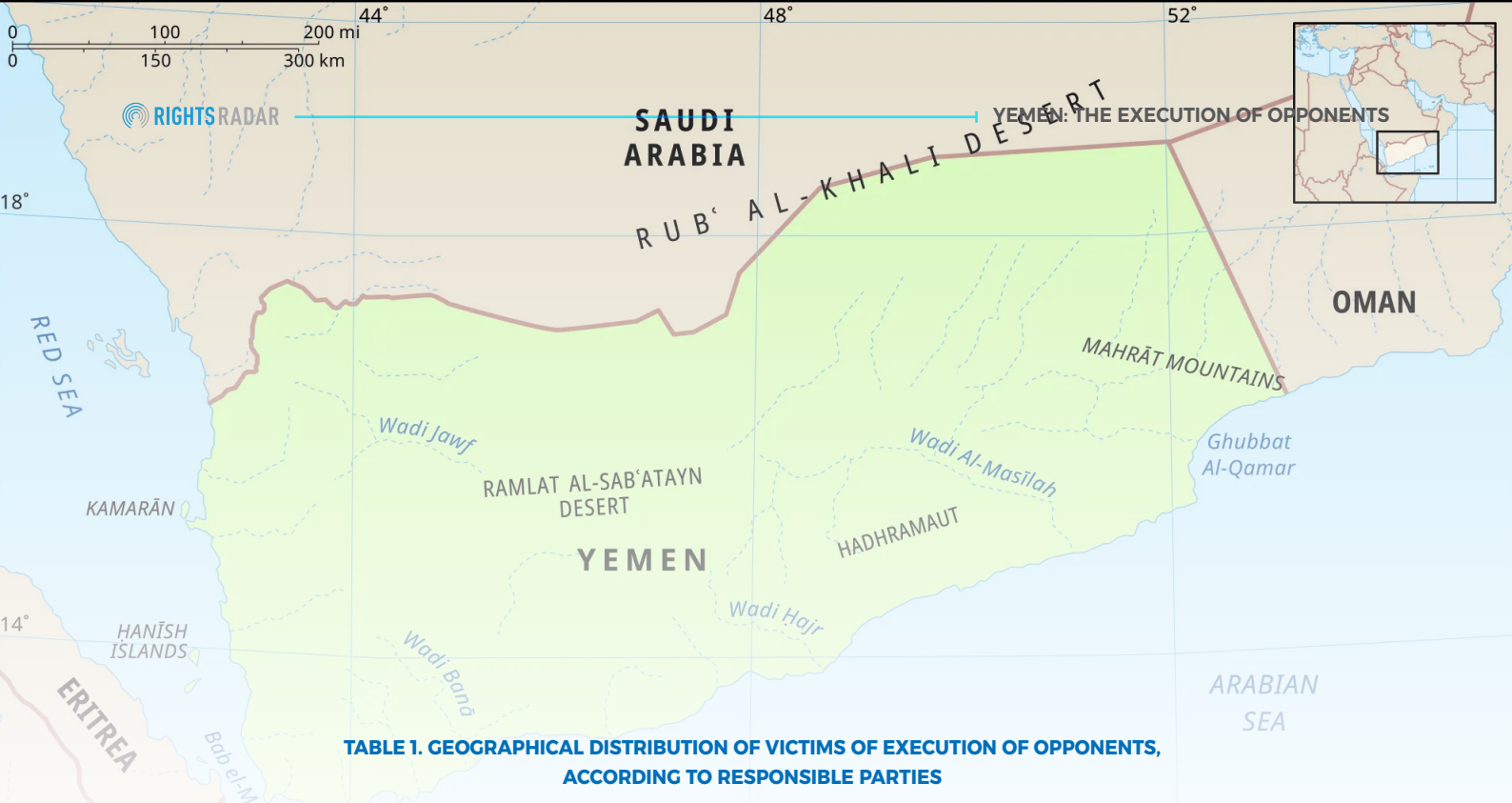


TABLE 1. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF VICTIMS OF EXECUTION OF OPPONENTS, ACCORDING TO RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Governorate	Houthi Militia	Illegal Formations	Al-Qaeda	Legitimate Government	Total
Aden	4	108	52	1	165
Taiz	35	59	0	19	113
Hadhramaut	0	9	84	0	93
capital, Sana'a	82	0	0	0	82
Abyan	1	29	28	1	59
Ibb	57	0	0	0	57
Al-Bayda	42	0	14	0	56
Dhamar	53	0	0	0	53
Al-Dhale'	26	5	9	0	40
Amran	39	0	0	0	39
Shabwah	2	13	14	1	30
Al-Hodeidah	28	0	0	1	29
Sana'a	28	0	0	0	28
Lahj	8	15	4	0	27
Hajjah	25	0	0	0	25
Sa'dah	25	0	0	0	25
Al-Mahwit	11	0	0	0	11
Al-Jawf	9	0	0	0	9
Ma'rib	2	0	0	6	8
Raymah	4	0	0	0	4
Total	481	238	205	29	953



POLITICAL REALITY DURING WAR

Since the Houthi militia declared its rebellion against the state – and following six previous wars with the government between January 2002 and February 2010 – the Houthi movement’s ultimate goal became clear. It focused on uprooting the republican system and eradicating its foundations, including political pluralism and the democratic approach. This aimed to pave the way for the restoration of Imamate rule. This ambition stemmed from their belief in the inherent right of their lineage to rule, a doctrine rooted in the concept of the divine right to power.



The Houthis have demonstrated a remarkable ability to exploit the divisions and conflicts, among their opponents, to advance their own interests. This became evident during the 2011 revolution, which aimed to overthrow the Saleh regime. At the same time, the Houthis secretly maintained channels of communication with him. Saleh, in turn, exploited these channels as a tool for his regime to take revenge on the opposition political forces that led the call for his overthrow, starting with Al-Islah Party and subsequently targeting other political groups. In exchange for their cooperation,

the Houthis received significant concessions, most notably gaining control of the city of Sa'dah in mid-March of 2011.

After Saleh left power in early 2012, in accordance with the Gulf Initiative, the Houthis seized the opportunity to openly carry out their activities throughout Yemen, focusing on Sana'a, the capital. They attracted political and tribal forces, including some influential leaders and elements, as well as their opponents. In addition, they positioned themselves as an ideological and political opponent of Al-Islah Party and its allies.



Between October 2011 and July 2014, certain Hashid and Bakil tribal sheikhs loyal to the Houthi militia facilitated the Houthi expansion. This began in Al-Jawf Governorate and the Damaj area of Sa'dah Governorate, progressing through Al-Osaymat and Houth regions, culminating in the capture of the city of Amran, the center of the governorate. This advancement was motivated by a desire for revenge against the family of Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar, the leader of Hashid tribe, and the Al-Islah Party.

Immediately after the Houthi militia captured the city of Amran on the evening of Tuesday, July 8, 2014, they carried out widespread acts of physical elimination. A prominent victim was Brigadier General Hameed Al-Qushaibi, commander of the 310th Armored Brigade, who was physically eliminated after being captured during the Houthi takeover of Amran Governorate.

While President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi and other political forces were engaged in the National Dialogue Conference, striving to resolve Yemen's complex issues and establish a civil state inclusive of all, the Houthi militia intensified their efforts to seize control of Sana'a. They aimed to disrupt the peaceful process and plunge the country back into violence.

On the morning of Sunday, September 21, 2014, the residents of Sana'a, along with all Yemenis, awoke to a dramatically altered political and military landscape. The Houthi militants had successfully invaded the capital, seizing control of all state institutions. All visible symbols of state authority vanished, including the security and police personnel stationed at major intersections, who were replaced by Houthi militants in civilian uniform.

From the moment Sana'a fell under Houthi control, the group systematically dismantled the political process and the republican system built on political pluralism and democracy, paving the way for the restoration of Imamate rule.

They seized control of all state institutions, confiscated the headquarters of 33 political parties and shut down 18 public and civil media outlets that opposed them. Furthermore, they arrested approximately 256 political opponents. The Houthi militants continued their expansion towards the rest of the Yemeni governorates, starting with the governorates of Hodeidah, Dhamar, Ibb and Al-Bayda, and ending with the governorates of Aden and Taiz.

On January 20, 2015, the Houthi militia carried out a coup against the constitutional order by seizing the presidential and republican palaces and other key government facilities in Sana'a. They placed President Hadi under house arrest, forcing him to resign. This was followed by the resignation of the government led by Khaled Bahah, replicating their earlier actions against the government of Mohammed Salem Basindawa.

On February 6, 2015, the Houthi militia issued a "constitutional declaration" to legitimize their coup. This declaration dissolved the House of Representatives (parliament) and established a five-member Presidential Council to govern the country during a two-year transitional period. This effectively disrupted the ongoing transition process aimed at resolving the country's crises and building a new Yemen.

On February 20, 2015, President Hadi had successfully secretly left his home in Sana'a, along with only three companions, by car. He traveled in disguise, changing vehicles several times, before reaching Ma'ashiq Palace in Aden the following day. He declared Aden the temporary capital and retracted his resignation, reaffirming his legitimacy.

Starting on March 15, 2015, the Houthi militia began mobilizing forces in Taiz and the surrounding areas of Dhale' and Al-Bayda, preparing to invade Aden and other southern provinces. Simultaneously, they advanced toward Ma'rib and Al-Jawf, seeking to consolidate their control over the north and east of the country.

On March 19, 2015, a Houthi warplane launched an air strike on Ma'ashiq Palace, in an attempt to assassinate President Hadi. This coincided with violent clashes between Hadi supporters and special security forces loyal to the Houthis, who had been ordered to challenge their commander and move toward Aden International Airport to prevent the president from leaving the country.

By March 25, 2015, the Houthi militia had captured the entire Dhale' Governorate, advancing through Lahj and seizing Al-Anad airbase. They then split into two forces: one heading toward Bab al-Mandab strait and the port of Mokha, the other continuing toward Aden. Within three days, they had taken control of Aden, Abyan and Shabwah.

Yemen, once a unified nation governed by a single republican system, is now contested by three main factions: the internationally recognized legitimate government, currently represented by an eight-member Presidential Leadership Council, led by Rashad Muhammad al-Alimi; the Houthi militia, which controls most of the northern governorates; and armed formations outside government control in the south and west, supported by the United Arab Emirates.

Each faction enjoys varying degrees of support within the Yemeni population. This support is influenced by such factors as geographical control, population density, the nature of their governance and the level of freedom and political pluralism allowed, including freedom of expression and the right to criticize the legitimate or de facto authorities.

Amidst the raging conflict among the three factions and the excessive use of force, instead of resorting to the ballot box as a peaceful and legal means to gain legitimacy, the circle of political opposition in war-torn Yemen is narrowing every day. Therefore, the pace of systematic political violence is escalating, and cases of the political opponents getting physically eliminated are multiplying.

For a decade, the conflict has witnessed a continuing cycle of extrajudicial killings, targeting individuals who hold differing political, religious, ideological or sectarian views from the warring parties. These killings often involve direct assassinations or the manipulation of the judicial system through fabricated charges and politically motivated death sentences.

These extrajudicial executions and physical eliminations are classified as deliberate killings outside of the rule of law. Victims are often civilians who are abducted, forcibly disappeared and tortured before being physically eliminated on fabricated charges or because of their political affiliation, in a country that is supposed to be governed by a republican system based on political pluralism and the democratic approach as a legitimate way to obtain a position of power.

The fear and anxiety generated by this climate of repression have forced many Yemenis to give up their basic rights guaranteed by the constitution and law, including the expression of their opinions and political choices. Many have abandoned political opposition activities to ensure their survival.

This repressive practice reveals the emerging stages of authoritarian rule within the country. If a future political settlement occurs, it may lead to the emergence of a unified ruling system that might be even more oppressive than its predecessors. This system would likely rely on fabricating accusations against any opponent or dissenter as a pretext for their elimination. These accusations would be followed by disproportionate punishments, ultimately leading to the physical elimination of the individual without due process.



WAR AND PHASES OF ARMED CONFLICT

The fall of Sana'a, the capital, to the Houthi militia on September 21, 2014, represented a major setback for the political and democratic processes. These processes began to gradually erode under the imposition of iron-fisted rule, characterized by tyranny and domination. This was further exacerbated by the escalation of political violence as a means to suppress dissenting voices and silence any opposition.



The Houthis shifted from their initial policy of rejecting most of the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference to a policy of forceful imposition. They forced the transitional authority and Yemeni political forces to accept the “Peace and Partnership Agreement” under the auspices of the United Nations. This agreement was strategically employed by the Houthis to obstruct any progress toward implementing the National Dialogue Conference document and to disrupt the overall political process.



THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT AND HOUTHI MILITIA

On January 15, 2015, as President Hadi's transitional authority took a final step toward completing the political process in Yemen — the celebration of handing over the draft of the new constitution to the National Authority for monitoring the outcomes of the dialogue — the Houthis objected. They argued that the authority had not yet been reconstituted in accordance with Articles 9 and 10 of the Peace and Partnership Agreement.

The Houthis then implemented a series of measures against the authority, culminating in pressure on the President of the Republic and his government to appoint Houthi leaders to key security and military positions. This effectively legitimized the coup and ensured Houthi control over decision-making centers. Resignation became the only option for Hadi and his government to avoid this significant act of political blackmail.

This was not enough for the Houthis. They imposed an armed siege on President Hadi's residence on West 60th Street in Sana'a and on the Republican Palace in Tahrir area, where the government was based, effectively placing everyone under house arrest. However, President Hadi managed to escape from Sana'a in disguise — again — and reach Aden Governorate, thwarting the Houthis' plans.

The Houthi militia then issued threats against Hadi, pursuing him to Aden. Facing this imminent danger, Hadi and key members of his regime were forced to flee to neighboring countries by land or sea. Simultaneously, the Houthi-Saleh alliance mobilized its forces toward the southern governorates, preparing for an invasion. This coincided with the rebellion of some security forces loyal to former President Saleh within Aden Governorate and the flight of their warplanes over the presidential Ma'ashiq Palace.

THE ARAB COALITION TO RESTORE LEGITIMACY IN YEMEN

After the Houthis tightened the noose around their last strongholds, President Hadi left the temporary capital, Aden, after battles reached its outskirts. He traveled by land toward the Sultanate of Oman and then to the Saudi capital, Riyadh, where he arrived at noon on Wednesday, March 25, 2015.

In the early hours of Thursday morning, March 26, 2015, Riyadh announced the launch of its military mission, "Operation Decisive Storm," within a military coalition to restore Yemeni legitimacy. This coalition comprised 10 Arab and Islamic countries led by Saudi Arabia.

The Houthi militia exploited the blessing or even the silence of some Yemeni political forces toward the Saudi intervention as a pretext to persecute their leaders and symbols. They imposed false charges on these individuals, accusing them of

supporting what they termed “external aggression,” treason and collaboration, including spying for coalition countries, providing coordinates and sending recruits to fight alongside the legitimate government.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN HOUTHI MILITIA AND AL-ISLAH PARTY

The conflict between the armed Houthi militia and Al-Islah Party escalated after the latter issued a statement supporting the intervention of the Coalition to Restore Legitimacy. In response, the Houthi militia announced the dissolution of the party on April 4, 2015, and subsequently launched abduction campaigns targeting hundreds of its cadres. Many were placed under house arrest, including the prominent party leader, Muhammad Qahtan, whose fate remains unknown to this day.

The Houthi militia also began nationalizing all the fixed assets and investments of Al-Islah Party. They then proceeded, through the so-called Houthi “judicial guardian,” to seize the properties of most of its leaders and cadres who left Sana’a and other areas

under their control. Some of these properties were even offered for sale at public auction. This escalated to the point of freezing the bank balances and accounts of ordinary party members in both public and private banks.

During the first three years of the Arab coalition forces’ intervention, some Islah Party leaders were subjected to physical elimination within Houthi prisons. Those physical eliminations included deaths resulting from physical torture and instances where they were used as human shields during air strikes on weapons depots or detention centers, which the Houthi militia had converted into military barracks. One such victim was the leader Amin Naji al-Rajwi in Dhamar Governorate

THE NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT IN YEMEN

On the other hand, the armed invasion of the southern governorates by the Houthi militia led to the return of the political and military conflict between the two parts of Yemen. This heightened demands among many southerners, who sought greater autonomy within a unified Yemeni state, eventually evolving into calls for self-determination and the establishment of an independent South

Yemen, effectively seeking a return to the conditions before the 1990 unification.

The conflict between the government and the Houthis continued even after the conclusion of “Operation Golden Arrow,” a swift ground offensive that legitimate forces and the southern resistance, with support from Saudi and Emirati forces plus air power

of the Arab Coalition, launched on Tuesday, July 14, 2015. Within a week, this operation liberated the temporary capital of Aden and significant portions of Lahj, Abyan and Al-Dhale' governorates, expelling Houthi militants and pushing them back to the borders of the northern governorates.

The Houthi militia committed numerous human rights violations, notably the physical elimination of southern prisoners and abductees who were taken during their withdrawal from Aden Governorate. This, in turn, triggered a wave of counterviolence by the forces of the southern movement against northerners residing in the south, culminating in forced displacements and acts of violence based on identity.

THE CONFLICT AMONG SOUTHERN RESISTANCE FACTIONS

Following the liberation of the southern Yemeni governorates, the United Arab Emirates deviated from the stated goal of the Arab Coalition, which was formed to end the Houthi coup and restore the legitimate government's authority. With an occupying mentality, the UAE began to impose its dominance from within Aden Governorate, treating it as a separate sphere of influence within Yemen.

The UAE actively fueled conflict between factions within the Southern Resistance and their allies in the temporary capital of Aden and other southern governorates. This was part of a systematic plan to divert attention from its true agenda, the implementation of which was entrusted to the separatist movement and Salafi factions. The UAE provided these groups with significant financial, military and security support, including the deployment of Emirati experts and foreign mercenaries.

Only about two weeks after the Houthis were expelled from Aden, due to "Operation Golden Arrow," a wave of violence erupted

among the liberation forces. Subsequent evidence revealed that this violence was supported by the UAE to consolidate its control over Aden. This began with a series of assassinations and leaders' physical eliminations within the peaceful southern movement factions that supported the legitimate government. This violence escalated, taking on a regional dimension, mirroring the historical conflicts within the southern Yemeni governorates.

By 2016, the rate of physical eliminations in Aden had doubled. The scope of these physical eliminations expanded to include prominent political figures, influential military and religious leaders, and national figures in the south who were perceived as opposing Emirati policies in Yemen and any initiatives that threatened Yemen's territorial integrity. Leaders and cadres of Al-Islah Party, along with preachers and imams of mosques affiliated with the party, and even some figures within the moderate Salafi movement, were among the primary targets of these assassinations and physical eliminations in Aden Governorate.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

In March 2016, approximately six months after the liberation of the southern governorates, the conflict escalated significantly. This followed the formation of the “Security Belt,” a force formally affiliated with the Ministry of Interior within the legitimate government. However, in reality, these forces were closely linked to the United Arab Emirates, which provided them with material and moral support, effectively utilizing them as proxies to achieve its own interests. The initial strength of the Security Belt was approximately 15,000 personnel.

This escalation occurred amidst a severe security vacuum, fierce conflict between supporters and opponents of the legitimate government, and UAE’s concerted effort to expand its influence in the south. These factors facilitated Abu Dhabi’s formation of additional forces, further utilizing them as proxies to advance Emirati ambitions in southern Yemen and protect its interests.

Between March 2016 and January 2017, 54 military and security brigades were established, comprising approximately 150,000 soldiers and officers. These forces were distributed across eight armed formations, each with varying justifications, including securing Aden and its surrounding areas, counterterrorism operations, securing oil facilities in Hadhramaut and Shabwah, as well as liberating the West Coast and Hodeidah.

These formations were characterized by a peculiar composition, combining followers of the separatist southern movement, the hardline Salafi movement, and persons resulting from the historical political and regional conflicts within southern Yemen predating the unification of the country. Furthermore, they included members of the Republican Guard and special forces loyal to former President Ali Saleh, originating from the north.

**TABLE 2. ARMED FORMATIONS OPERATING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE
LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN AREAS UNDER ITS CONTROL**

Name	Brigades	Number	Person in Charge	Place of Deployment
Security Belt	4	33,000	Brigadier Mohsen Abdullah al-Wali	Aden, Lahj, Abyan and Dhale
Counterterrorism	1	6,000	Yusran Al-Maqtari	the capital, Aden
Shabwani Elite	7	15,000	Col. Muhammad Salim Al-Bohar Lokmishi	Shabwah Governorate
Hadhrami Elite	4	30,000	Faiz Al-Tamimi	Mukalla
Giants Brigades	20	32,000	Abu Zara'a Al-Mahrami	West Coast
National Resistance	17	32,000	Tareq Saleh	West Coast
Abu Al-Abbas Brigades	1	4,000	Adel Abdo Farea	Taiz
Total	54	152,000	152,000 soldiers, officers and commanders	

Over the course of two years, some of these formations carried out tasks assigned to them by the UAE, operating under the state's umbrella, specifically in the governorates of Aden, Shabwah and Hadhramaut. They were accused of committing various crimes and violations, including home raids, attacks on government and party headquarters, arbitrary arrests and physical eliminations, targeting political opponents, critics of UAE policies and even state officials.

Consequently, President Hadi broke his silence and revoked the legal cover for these formations, declaring they were not affiliated with the state and received directives from the UAE and some of its allies in the south, including former Aden Governor Aidarous al-Zubaidi and former Minister of State Hani bin Braik. Hadi dismissed them from their positions on April 27, 2017, with bin Braik facing investigation, which angered Abu Dhabi.

A SECOND COUP AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SOUTH OF YEMEN

On Thursday, May 11, 2017, the United Arab Emirates surprised President Hadi and his legitimate government by announcing the creation of the Southern Transitional Council, a parallel entity mirroring the Houthi coup's Supreme Political Council in the north. They appointed Aidarous al-Zubaidi, head of their largest armed faction, as the council's president and placed all its armed formations under the council's control, effectively harnessing their material and military resources to serve its objectives and implement its plans and directives.

President Hadi and his government belatedly recognized the emergence of a parallel project aimed at undermining the state. This project sought to disrupt Aden's geopolitical function as Yemen's temporary capital, hindering its transformation into a permanent headquarters for the legitimate government and an operational and logistical base for the army and security forces. These forces were expected to operate under the unified command of the Ministries of Defense and Interior.

In a statement issued by the Yemeni presidency, President Hadi considered this step a coup, no different from the Houthi coup in the north, as it was outside the framework of legitimacy of government, national constants. He described it as a threat to Yemen's future, territorial integrity and social fabric.

A year after the establishment of the Southern Transitional Council, with financial, military and logistical support from the UAE, the council extended its influence over all state institutions and bodies in the temporary capital, Aden, becoming its de facto ruler. Meanwhile, the legitimate government's presence there remained a mere formality. This marked the beginning of a new phase in the conflict — one that turned bloody after intermittent confrontations between the STC armed formations and the legitimacy forces.

On Saturday, August 10, 2019, Aden, the temporary capital of Yemen, witnessed a second coup against constitutional legitimacy. Following bloody confrontations between the national army, affiliated with the legitimate government, and the armed forces of the STC, fully supported by the UAE, the latter consolidated its control over Aden, forcing the legitimate government and its affiliated forces to withdraw.

Following the pattern of the northern coup plotters, the southern coup plotters continued to physically eliminate their opponents and adversaries, either through extrajudicial killings or by manipulating the judicial system to conduct sham trials that resulted in executions. One such case involved journalist Ahmed Maher, who was subjected to a politically motivated trial that lacked basic principles of integrity and justice. He was initially sentenced to death, but the Court of Appeal later acquitted him of all charges after he had endured approximately two years of detention.

THE CONFLICT AMONG THE COUP PARTNERS IN THE NORTH OF YEMEN

After his removal from power in early 2012, the late President Ali Abdullah Saleh began coordinating and cooperating with the Houthis in their war against the legitimate government and the other political and national forces supporting it. This alliance, initially clandestine and driven by revenge against the revolutionary forces that had demanded his departure, was officially announced on March 30, 2015. However, this alliance proved to be fragile, with Saleh and his followers repeatedly excluded, marginalized and sidelined by the Houthis over the next three years.

On Tuesday, November 28, 2017, Saleh suddenly announced the end of his alliance and partnership with the Houthis, expressing his readiness to negotiate with the Saudi-led Arab coalition. In a pre-recorded speech, he called upon his party, supporters and backers to rebel against the Houthi coup, defend the republican system, Yemeni unity and the gains of the September 26 and October 14 revolutions. Following this declaration, the Houthis launched a vicious smear campaign against Saleh, accusing him of treason and spying by opening lines of communication

with what they termed “aggression” countries and their mercenaries. This rhetoric quickly escalated, with both parties mobilizing military and tribal forces toward Sana’a. Violent clashes broke out, culminating in Houthi forces surrounding Saleh’s Sana’a house in all directions.

On Monday, December 4, 2017, the Houthis released a video showing a group of their fighters carrying Saleh’s body, which bore a gunshot wound to the head. Simultaneously, leaders of Saleh’s party, the General People’s Congress, accused the Houthis of physically eliminating Saleh and fellow party leader, Aref al-Zouka, and mutilating their bodies.

Regardless of the disputed location and manner of Saleh’s killing, the extrajudicial killing of a political opponent constitutes a gross violation of human rights. The use of excessive violence and brutality, the use of weapons and tools of murder to resolve a political dispute, and the inhumane public display of a political opponent’s body in the media are unacceptable, both morally and legally.

FORMATION OF A PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL IN RIYADH

On Thursday, April 7, 2022, President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi issued a republican decree establishing the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), composed of eight members. Through this decree, Hadi gave up all his presidential powers, as well as the powers of his deputy, in favor of the newly formed council. The council was entrusted with the responsibility of “administering Yemen politically, militarily and security-wise during the transitional phase.”

The Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) was formed under the chairmanship of Rashad Muhammad Al-Alimi and included seven members who all held the rank of Vice President: Sultan Al-Arrada, Governor of Ma’rib; Tariq Saleh, Commander of the Republican Guard Forces; Abdul Rahman Abu Zar’ah, Commander of the Giants Forces; Abdullah al-Alimi, former Director of the Office of the Presidency of the Republic; Othman Majli, former Minister of State; Aidarous al-Zubaidi, Chairman of the Southern Transitional Council; and Faraj Al-Bahsani, former Commander of the Second Military Region.



THE DEADLIEST PARTIES TO THEIR OPPONENTS



HOUTHI MILITIA

The discourse of intimidation has been pervasive within the Houthi militia's media against any opponent or critic of its wrongful practices and behaviors since its coup against constitutional legitimacy in early 2015. This discourse escalated into accusations of treason and spying, with critics labeled as collaborators with the "aggressor countries" (the Arab Coalition) following the launch of "Operation Decisive Storm," the first military operation against the Houthis. These accusations have persisted after "Operation Hope Storm" and are still unabated to this day.

Following the Houthi militia's domination of all state civil, military and security institutions, a dangerous climate of insecurity surrounded individuals connected to political, intellectual and ideological parties that differ from the Houthi ideology. A discourse of incitement to violence and hatred was pervasive throughout all Houthi militia literature and its visual, audio and print media. This discourse was deeply rooted in sectarian, denominational and regional divisions and prejudices.

KILLING OF ABDUCTED OPPONENTS BY USING THEM AS HUMAN SHIELDS

Among the victims of the political opponents being physically eliminated is Amin Naji Al-Rajawi, the head of the political department of Islah Party in Ibb Governorate and a member of the party's Shura Council. A father of seven, Al-Rajawi had held several positions in the educational field and was one of Ibb Governorate's most prominent dignitaries.

About six months after the Houthi rebellion began in the capital Sana'a, Houthi militants invaded Ibb Governorate and established full control.



On Friday, April 3, 2015, Amin Naji al-Rajawi received a phone call from Fadl Al-Muta'a, the Houthi leader in the governorate, requesting his presence at the Security Department for an important consultation. Al-Rajawi contacted Colonel Muhammad Abdul-Jalil al-Shami, the Director of Ibb Police, who confirmed the request.

According to sources close to him, Al-Rajawi initially tried to apologize on the pretext that he had guests. However, faced with the caller's insistence, he apologized to his guests and departed after the afternoon prayer, accompanied by his son and a personal companion. Upon arrival, he contacted Al-Muta'a, who directed him to the criminal investigation building adjacent to the security department. Al-Rujawi exited his car, leaving his phone inside, and was instructed to proceed alone.

Al-Rajawi's companion later reported, "A few moments later, Houthi leader Al-Muta'a approached me and inquired, 'Are you al-Rujawi's son?' I denied being his son, and he surprisingly revealed that Al-Rajawi was being detained and instructed me to leave." The companion immediately informed Al-Rajawi's son. They were then alarmed by the deployment of additional security personnel and gunmen around the building, confirming Al-Rajawi's abduction and the Houthis preparations for any potential resistance⁽¹⁾.

Two days later, through the mediation of Sheikh Abdul Wahid Salah, who was later appointed governor of Ibb by the Houthis, a delegation from the Joint Meeting Parties met with Houthi leaders in the governorate to negotiate Al-Rajawi's release. The Houthis attributed Al-Rajawi's disappearance to his party's support for "Operation Decisive Storm," demanding an impossible condition in exchange for information about his fate. Despite fulfilling this condition, the Houthis broke their promise. Instead, they compelled all political parties to sign an agreement containing clauses criminalizing any opposition to the Houthi militia's actions and its militants within Ibb Governorate.

(1) A recorded interview with al-Rajawi's companion, whose personal information we are withholding for reasons related to his security and safety.

The Houthi militants subsequently transferred the political opponent, Al-Rajawi, to the headquarters of Harran Park, located north of Dhamar city. The Houthis had converted this location into a military barrack and weapons depot, and, later they reused it as a prison to detain opponents, including Al-Rajawi and numerous political and media activists, primarily affiliated with Islah Party. These detainees were tragically used as “human shields” against air strikes conducted by the Arab Coalition aircraft. Al-Rajawi was forcibly confined within this location for approximately one and a half months, during which his family remained unaware of his location or his health status.

At five o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, May 21, 2015, Arab Coalition aircraft targeted the headquarters of Harran Park with three air strikes, turning its facilities into rubble. Three days after the incident, media reports confirmed that the body of Al-Islah leader Amin Al-Rajawi was among the casualties of these raids. His body was recovered from the bombing site and transported to the morgue of Dhamar City General Hospital.

POISON: HOUTHIS' WEAPON TO MURDER OPPONENTS



Poison is one of the most mysterious, horrific and brutal methods of physical elimination and the least of them in mercy, speed and weight. While often associated with eliminating “spies, traitors and agents,” its use extends beyond such conventional targets in areas controlled by the Houthi militia in Yemen. The Houthis resort to poison to eliminate political opponents, driven purely by political motives that do not justify such violence.

Perhaps the most prominent victims of this deadly weapon are Masoud Ahmed Abdullah Al-Hadi, 61, who was a member of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party Organization, and Hassan Ahmed Ali Al-Aznam Al-Hadi, 34, a fellow leader in the same party from the Radhmah Directorate. Both tragically died within three days of their release from the Political Security prison in the city of Ibb, likely due to politically motivated motives.



While some relatives attributed their deaths to severe torture endured during their three-day detention in the Houthi intelligence prison, party leaders suggested they had been poisoned while being in prison. The poison allegedly took effect after their release, ultimately leading to their deaths.

According to available and documented information, the two socialist leaders, Masoud al-Hadi and Hassan Al-Aznam, were abducted on Saturday morning, October 22, 2016, from al-Haqb area in Damt District of Al-Dhale' Governorate, along with several other residents. They were accused of involvement in popular resistance against the Houthi advance in the area and surrounding villages. A statement by A.S., a leader of the Socialist Party organization in Damt District, said, “The deaths of two prominent party leaders within a single day, separated by only an hour, and occurring just three days after their release from the Houthi prison, strongly suggest that their deaths were not natural, but rather the result of poisoning. The Houthis deliberately obstructed investigations and forensic examinations to conceal the cause of death.”

The Houthi group used political trials as a means to suppress opponents and abuse them in areas under its control, where opponents or critics of their policies were targeted, arrested and detained for long periods without formal charges being brought, in many cases. They were also subjected to forced disappearance, reaching more than six years in many cases, and were subjected to... Also excessive and inhuman torture with the aim of forcing them to confess to crimes they did not commit

THE JUDICIARY AS A TOOL TO KILL HOUTHI OPPONENTS

In another pattern of physically eliminating opponents, the Houthi militia has used the judiciary as a political tool to intimidate, eliminate and abuse its political adversaries, while also confiscating their property. Courts in areas under Houthi control have been transformed into platforms for issuing mass political judgments, including numerous death sentences.

The Houthi militia has employed political trials as a means to suppress and abuse opponents within its controlled areas. Critics, or those who oppose their policies, are targeted through arbitrary arrests and prolonged detention without formal charges, in many cases. These individuals have also been subjected to enforced disappearances, with some cases exceeding six years in duration. Furthermore, their captors make these captives endure excessive and inhumane torture to extract forced confessions from them, which are subsequently used as primary evidence in the fabricated trials. This approach represents a scandalous disregard for human rights and constitutes a clear violation of international laws that prohibit torture and cruel treatment.

These victims are then subjected to sham trials that lack the minimum standards of a fair trial. Defendants are systematically denied their fundamental legal rights, including the right to defend themselves and to have adequate legal representation. In many cases, lawyers are prevented from accessing their clients or reviewing case files, rendering any effective legal defense impossible.

On April 20, 2018, the Supreme Judicial Council (Sharia) issued a decision dissolving the Specialized Primary Criminal Court in the capital, Sana'a, and transferring its responsibilities and jurisdiction to the Specialized Primary Criminal Court in Ma'rib Governorate. Furthermore, Decision No. 38 of 2019 declared all rulings issued by courts under the control of the Houthi militia invalid. These two decisions effectively stripped the so-called Specialized Primary Criminal Court and the Specialized Appeals Division in Sana'a of any legitimate judicial authority.



However, the Houthi militia continues to utilize the Specialized Primary Criminal Court in Sana'a, despite it having absolutely no legal jurisdiction and competence, as a tool for political revenge, the confiscation of private property and the mass issuance of death sentences.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME DOCUMENTED STATISTICS THAT CONFIRM THIS:

According to the Rights Radar field monitoring and documentation team, the Houthi militia has issued 145 political death sentences against abducted individuals. Among these victims are 10 people from Hodeidah, most of whom are politically affiliated with the General People's Congress (the party of the late President Ali Saleh) and hold significant social influence within their geographical environment. One of these individuals was tragically killed as a result of torture while imprisoned within a Houthi facility in Sana'a. The remaining nine were executed by firing squad on Saturday, September 18, 2021, in a public scene in the heart of the capital, Sana'a, marking an unprecedented display of the judiciary's exploitation for the purpose of physical elimination.

This series of events began in August 2018 when the Houthi militia abducted nine of these individuals and placed the tenth under house arrest without any formal charges. It is crucial to note that all 10 individuals were prominent leaders and cadres within the Congress Party. While they had previously collaborated with the Houthis within mobilization committees for the fighting fronts between 2015 and 2017, this cooperation occurred during the period of the alliance between the late President Ali Saleh and the Houthi militia. However, Saleh and his party subsequently withdrew from this alliance following its dissolution in late November 2017.

On Sunday, November 18, 2018, the Houthi militia abducted tribal Sheikh Ali al-Qawzi, a prominent leader within the General People's Congress Party and Secretary-General of the Local Council in Hodeidah Governorate, after placing him under house arrest. He was subsequently transferred, along with the other abducted individuals, to Sana'a on fabricated charges of secret communication with the legitimate government. Two months later, Houthi media outlets circulated their photographs as part of a list of individuals accused of assassinating Saleh Ali Al-Sammad, the leader of the Houthi Supreme Political Council, who was tragically killed in an air strike conducted by the Arab Coalition on April 19, 2018.

On Tuesday, April 16, 2019, an indictment was issued by the Criminal Prosecution Office in Hodeidah, which remains under Houthi control. The indictment included a list of accusations against 62 defendants, including 10 from Hodeidah Governorate, accusing them of participating in a criminal act targeting the motorcade of Saleh al-Sammad with three Mark 82 bombs dropped by Coalition aircraft in the neighborhood of Hodeidah on July 7, 2019.

On Wednesday, April 17, 2019, the Specialized Criminal Court of First Instance in Hodeidah held the first session of its politically motivated trial of the 10 defendants. However, the defendants' defense team, consisting of three lawyers, was mysteriously denied access to the proceedings. This situation persisted until the fourth session, held on May 4, 2019, constituting a disgraceful violation of the defendants' fundamental right to legal representation.

On Monday, September 9, 2019, during the ninth session of the trial, the court announced the death of one of the 10 defendants, Ali Abdo Ahmed Kazaba, aged 21, while in prison. The court attributed his death to deteriorating health, however, Rights Radar investigations verified that the victim had been affected by injuries sustained during severe torture. This tragic fate awaited the other defendants, who had been forced to confess under duress and through torture.

On Monday, August 24, 2020, the Specialized Criminal Court in Hodeidah, affiliated with the Houthi militia, issued an initial judgment in this case, sentencing 16 defendants, including nine residents of Hodeidah Governorate, to death. Subsequently, on April 5, 2021, the Specialized Criminal Appeals Division in Hodeidah issued a final judgment upholding these death sentences, which were then ratified by the Houthi Supreme Court in Sana'a on September 12, 2021.

On the morning of Saturday, September 18, 2021, the Houthi militia carried out a mass execution of these nine victims, executing them by firing squad in the heart of Tahrir Square in the capital, Sana'a.

This act of state-sponsored violence was a direct consequence of a politically motivated judicial judgment based on fabricated charges, resulting in a horrific scene that sparked widespread anger and condemnation from both the local and international communities.

TABLE 3. VICTIMS OF MASS EXECUTION ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2021

No.	Name	Age	Job
1	Moaz Abdulrahman Abdullah Abbas	23	A merchant from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
2	Abdulaziz Ali Mohammed Al-Aswad	17	A student from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
3	Mohammed Mohammed Ali Al-Mashkhari	47	A teacher from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
4	Ibrahim Mohammed Abdullah Aqil	44	A teacher from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
5	Muhammad Yahya Muhammad Noah	46	An educator from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
6	Muhammad Ibrahim Ali Al-Qawzi	36	A notable from Al-Qanawis District of Hodeidah Governorate
7	Mohammed Khaled Ali Heij	34	A soldier from Al-Zahra District of Hodeidah Governorate
8	Abdulmalik Ahmed Mohammed Hamid	55	A police officer residing in Sana'a
9	Ali Ali Ibrahim Al-Qawzi	43	Secretary-General of the Local Council in Hodeidah Governorate

TORTURE: HOUTHIS' METHOD TO PHYSICALLY ELIMINATE OPPONENTS

Activist Hamdi Abdul Razzaq Al-Khawlani, aged 34, known as “Al-Mukahhal,” was born in the old city of Ibb Governorate. Married with a son and a daughter, he worked as a motorcycle driver to support his family. Tragically, Houthi gunmen killed Al-Mukahhal simply for exercising his fundamental right to freedom of expression, a right guaranteed by law and the constitution.

Since mid-October 2022, Al-Mukahhal began posting video clips on his personal social media pages courageously and frankly criticizing the injustice and corruption of the armed Houthi militia and its numerous crimes against the Yemeni people. His frankness was admired by many followers but also angered the Houthi leadership in Ibb Governorate, prompting a violent response.

On Monday, October 24, 2022, a Houthi military force surrounded Al-Khawlani's house in the Al-Midan neighborhood to arrest him. However, the determined resistance of local residents thwarted the Houthi attempt to reach the neighborhood. This forced the Houthis to seek the intervention of tribal dignitaries and local leaders, who ultimately convinced Al-Khawlani to surrender voluntarily. He was subsequently imprisoned for about two weeks before being released under strict conditions, including a pledge to cease his criticism of the Houthi militia.

Out of respect for the dignitaries and sheikhs who had intervened on his behalf, Al-Khawlani initially complied with these conditions. However, he could not remain silent in the face of the Houthi militia's continued human rights violations against the people of Ibb Governorate. He resumed his audio activity, exposing their abuses to the public.

As a consequence, Al-Khawlani was summoned by the Houthis for interrogation and subsequently detained in the Houthi detention center in Ibb Governorate for a second time. While imprisoned, he was subjected to severe physical abuse and torture, eventually dying as a result of his injuries on March 19, 2023. In a desperate attempt to cover up this shameful crime, the Houthi militia claimed that Al-Khawlani had died while attempting to escape from prison, despite all evidence pointing to a brutal killing due to physical elimination.



ARMED FORMATIONS OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT

Security and military forces operating outside the framework of the internationally recognized legitimate government played a significant role in escalating the conflict and fueling political violence. This resulted in widespread physical eliminations across the country, particularly in the temporary capital, Aden, and other southern governorates, including Shabwah, Hadhramaut, Abyan, Lahj and Dhale', as well as parts of the northern governorates of Taiz and Hodeidah.

Beyond political motives related to the struggle for power, regional motives emerged in the southern governorates, further exacerbating the violence. This included systematic incitement against the northern population residing in the south, manifested through campaigns of persecution, arrest and displacement. Furthermore, there was widespread persecution of southern opponents based on their identity and regional affiliation.

The southern governorates, particularly the city of Aden, witnessed the highest incidence of politically and regionally motivated physical eliminations, targeting civilians and military personnel, including party leaders, religious figures, officers, soldiers, media professionals, tribal leaders and political activists. These individuals often held opposing views or were critical of the policies of the Southern Transitional Council (STC), which is supported by the UAE. Subsequently, areas under the control of government forces in the north, particularly the city of Taiz, where the Abu Abbas Brigades are located, also experienced similar acts of violence. These brigades, like the armed formations in the areas of the West Coast, where the Giants Brigades and National Resistance forces are stationed, operate outside the control of the legitimate government. However, the latter forces showed a lower level of violence against opponents, likely due to their historical context and the circumstances surrounding their emergence.

Examples of Killing of Southern Transitional Council Opponents in the South of Yemen





عبدالله هزاع

Sheikh Saleh Salem Bin Hulays, born in October 1969, married and father of five children, was the Imam and preacher of Al-Rida Mosque and head of the judicial department of Al-Islah Party in Aden Governorate. He also served as an educational supervisor and advisor to the Education Department in Aden.

On Monday at 4 p.m., August 15, 2016, Bin Hulays was fatally shot at Al-Dahina Restaurant on Al-Qasr Street in front of Al-Mansoura Post Office. Four gunmen on a motorcycle carried out the assassination: Ashraf Muhammad Rashid, Shaif Ali Shaif, Sameh Al-Nurji and Muhammad Ali Al-Zaidi⁽¹⁾.

According to the head of the assassination cell, Ammar Kardam, who informed the perpetrators that the operation was in favor of the state of South Arabia, as stated by the Director of Aden Police, Shalal Shayea, and, considering the victim's personal record, which is full of positions opposing separation, as well as his wide circle of influence, the motives for the physical elimination operation against him appear to be purely political.

Based on the confessions of the perpetrators, supported by the records of the Public Prosecution's evidence collection and the documented testimonies of witnesses and the victim's family, the elimination of Bin Hulays was determined to be a case of direct premeditated murder. The second defendant, Ashraf Muhammad Rashid, fired several bullets from an automatic machine gun (Kalashnikov), five of which struck the victim in the abdomen and arms. He was subsequently transferred to Al-Naqeeb Hospital, where he later died from his injuries.

Bin Hulays' companion, a young man named Raed Ahmed Dhiban, who was standing beside him during the incident, suffered multiple gunshot wounds. However, his condition stabilized after receiving immediate medical attention at the same hospital where the victim was transferred. He was fortunate to survive the attack.



نجم الدين هزاع

(1) Some of the details contained in the Public Prosecution records based on statements made by the accused Muhammad Ali al-Zaidi, and we have a copy of these statements.



ابو بكر سيف



محمد سيف

MASS EXECUTION OF OPPONENTS BY THE UAE-BACKED ABU AL-ABBAS BRIGADES

After Friday prayers on May 18, 2018, four soldiers — Najm Al-Din Hazaa, Abdullah Hazaa, Muhammad Saif Sarhan and Abu Bakr Saif Muhammad Al-Raziqi — left their positions on the front lines of the eastern front in Taiz city. They were heading to 26 September Street in the city center to purchase some necessities and to visit their aunt to congratulate her on the coming of Ramadan.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, while on their way to returning to their positions by motorcycle, they were intercepted at the entrance to the Al-Hindi neighborhood near Nasser School, close to September 26th Street, by gunmen belonging to the UAE-backed Abu Al-Abbas Brigade. The gunmen abducted the soldiers, taking them to an unknown location. This abduction occurred under the pretext that they belonged to a government military brigade involved in a security campaign targeting wanted personnel from Abu Al-Abbas Brigade.

Two days after the soldiers were abducted, residents of Al-Jumhuri Neighborhood began to notice a bad smell coming from the area, which reached all the way to their homes. They informed the neighborhood sheikh and urged him to investigate the source of the bad odor to prevent any potential harm to residents.

On Monday, May 21, 2018, the neighborhood sheikh filed a report at Al-Jumhuri Police Station regarding the bad odor originating from the courtyard of Al-Aqsa Kindergarten⁽²⁾. The following morning, two other citizens arrived at the same station to report the discovery of unidentified bodies within the same kindergarten, as detailed in the report submitted to the Director of Taiz Police⁽³⁾.

(2) We keep a copy of the submitted report.

(3) We keep a copy of the report.

The report indicated that representatives from the Al-Jumhuri Police Station investigated the source of the bad smell and discovered four bodies in a state of decomposition within the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Kindergarten.

On Thursday, May 31, 2018, the families of the missing soldiers were summoned to participate in a security campaign to identify their sons. It was subsequently confirmed that the four bodies belonged to the soldiers who had been abducted at the entrance to Al-Hindi Lane.

Forensic reports attributed the cause of death of the four soldiers to complications arising from gunshot wounds, with the severity of injuries varying among them. This evidence confirms that they were victims of physical elimination perpetrated by their abductors, who are affiliated with the UAE-backed Abu Abbas Brigade. These physical eliminations were politically motivated, specifically targeting opponents of UAE policy in Yemen, including members of the forces and supporters of the Internationally Recognized Legitimate Government.

However, the security services affiliated with the legitimate government practiced some methods of restrictions on its opponents and opponents, including arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance, while placing several restrictions on the activities and movements of some opponents.



THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT

Areas controlled by the Legitimate Government show the most significant signs of recovery compared to those under the influence of other conflict parties. This is attributed to the Legitimate Government allowing political parties, civil society organizations and trade unions a degree of freedom, even if limited, enabling them to conduct certain activities, organize events and express opposing opinions and positions with relative ease.

However, security services affiliated with the Legitimate Government have used methods to restrict opposition, including harassment of thinkers, political activists, media professionals and human rights defenders. These instances of harassment have ranged from arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances to various restrictions on the activities and movements of opponents, culminating in the physical elimination of some individuals.

While acknowledging that these incidents represent individual actions and do not reflect a systemic policy of the security and military services affiliated with the Internationally Recognized Legitimate Government, some government officials have confirmed this position. Nevertheless, there is a notable lack of accountability for perpetrators of such acts, coupled with significant delays in judicial proceedings for cases referred to the courts.

THE MURDER OF NAJIB HANASH IN TAIZ

The city of Taiz, under the control of Legitimate Government Forces, has witnessed numerous physical eliminations. One such incident involved Najib Naji Muhammad Hanash (b. 1981), a resident of Radmah District in Ibb Governorate and the only breadwinner for his family. Hanash was a member of the Salafi Movement and had alleged ties to Abu Al-Abbas Brigade.

On the morning of Saturday, March 23, 2019, Hanash left his home to open his shop in Al-Sawani Lane of Al-Muzaffar District in the central area of Taiz city. Shortly after, he left the shop to have breakfast at a neighbor's house.

"Najib's wife and children went out, and when she saw him lying on the ground, covered in his blood, she screamed, 'They killed Najib.' The soldiers of the security campaign left, and then the people of the neighborhood came and took him to Al-Thawra Hospital, where some first aid was given to him in the emergency department.

The process of physical liquidation that Najib Hanash was subjected to was documented via a video clip taken by one of those present at the moment the crime was committed and then circulated by activists on social media sites.

As he passed a group of armed government soldiers conducting a security operation, one of them stopped him and inquired about his residence.

According to his brother, Fouad, "My brother confidently stated that he was a resident of the neighborhood and was returning home. The soldier then demanded that he accompany them to an unspecified location. When Hanash refused, the soldier opened fire on him. He managed to flee to his house and shut the door, but bullets followed him inside. He was struck as he ascended the stairs. My brother's wife and children witnessed the shooting and cried out, 'They killed Najeeb!' The soldiers then ran away from the place. Neighbors rushed to help Hanash and transferred him to Al-Thawra Hospital, where he received emergency medical treatment.

While doctors prepared the operating room to remove bullet fragments from Hanash's body, a vehicle carrying armed men in civilian clothes stormed the hospital. They entered the ward where Hanash was located, forcibly removed him from it and transported him to the Sa'elat Osaifrah area, near Al-Saeed Mosque, where they eliminated him.

A subsequent security investigation revealed that the perpetrators were soldiers involved in the security operation. They received a phone call from other soldiers who had initially stopped Hanash, informing them of his location at Al-Thawra Hospital. Consequently, they pursued, abducted and ultimately killed Hanash based on suspicions of his affiliation with Abu Al-Abbas Brigade and allegations of involvement in the assassination of a military commander associated with one of the security personnel. All that he did "wrong" was walk by the soldiers.

The physical elimination of Najib Hanash was captured on video by a witness and subsequently circulated on social media. While Taiz police administration and local military leadership acknowledged the involvement of some of their soldiers, led by Muhammad Munir Al-Mikhlaifi, in the incident, they attributed the actions to a lack of military discipline under the leader of the group. They promised to pursue these individuals, but the case was eventually closed.

It adopted specific operations targeting any Houthi gatherings in Sanaa, the first of which was the suicide bombing in early October 2014 in Tahrir Square in Sanaa, which resulted in the liquidation of 50 Houthi fighters.

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AL-QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

In early 2014, former President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi declared an open war on elements of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), forcing them to leave Abyan Governorate (in the south) two years after declaring it an Islamic emirate. Al-Qaeda saw in the war against the Houthi rebellion a golden opportunity to reassert itself, returning to the forefront of events and gaining the sympathy of Yemenis by portraying themselves as defenders of Sunnis against the Houthi threat. They described the Houthis as “Shiite Rafidis,” who must be fought, and insisted that the country must be liberated from their influence.

As the armed conflict between Houthi forces and the Legitimate Government, along with other Yemeni forces opposing the Houthis, intensified, Al-Qaeda elements became involved, injecting sectarian and ideological dimensions into the political conflict. They carried out targeted attacks against the Houthis, beginning with a suicide bombing in October 2014 that targeted a large Houthi gathering in Tahrir Square, Sana’a, resulting in the deaths of approximately 50 Houthis.

This was followed by several bombings believed to have been carried out by Al-Qaeda elements, including two suicide bombings that targeted Houthi leaders and worshippers at Badr and Al-Hashoosh mosques, located south and north of the capital, Sana’a, the areas with a Zaidi Shiite majority. These bombings, on the afternoon of Friday, March 20, 2015, resulted in the deaths of 140 worshippers and eliminated several of the Houthi militia’s religious figures, including Al-Murtadha Al-Muhawwari, the preacher of Badr Mosque.

Subsequently, Al-Qaeda shifted its focus to Aden, the temporary government capital, after retaking it from Houthi militants. Al-Qaeda elements initiated their terrorist operations in Aden on the afternoon of Sunday, December 6, 2015, after they retook the city, beginning with the physical elimination of its first governor, Major General Jaafar Mohammed Saad, along with six of his companions. They were killed in a car bomb explosion that targeted their convoy as it passed through Fatah area in Tawahi District.

PHYSICAL ELIMINATION OF OPPONENTS BY SLAUGHTER

Al-Qaeda officially claimed responsibility for the liquidation of 14 soldiers in Hadhramaut Governorate on its page on the

In a message in which she wanted to create a state of terror and discontent within the ranks of the army, which might push hundreds of them to leave their units and create the atmosphere for the organization's complete control.

Hadhramaut Governorate witnessed the most horrible physical eliminations, committed by Al-Qaeda elements against opponents, including security and army personnel loyal to the Legitimate Government. Al-Qaeda labeled these individuals “tyrants” and accused them of collaborating with the United States. These killings, frequently involving the use of knives, resembled the methods employed by the Islamic State (ISIS) organization, which was active at that time in Iraq, Syria and other countries.

On Friday, August 8, 2014, Al-Qaeda officially claimed responsibility for killing 14 soldiers in Hadhramaut Governorate. They published graphic images and videos on X platform (formerly Twitter), showing the soldiers being brutally murdered with knives. Al-Qaeda justified these actions as revenge for a recent military campaign against their forces in Hadhramaut.

All the victimized soldiers originated from the northern governorates of Yemen. They were members of the 135th Infantry Brigade stationed in Seiyun, Hadhramaut Governorate. While traveling in civilian clothes on a public transport bus to spend their annual leave with their families in the capital, Sana’a, they were ambushed and abducted at gunpoint by armed elements affiliated with Ansar al-Sharia, the local branch of Al-Qaeda in Yemen.

Videos and images shared by Ansar al-Sharia online displayed the dead soldiers, their bodies covered in blood in front of Al-Baqar café in Al-Hawtah area near Seiyun in Wadi Hadhramaut. This horrific display aimed to spread terror and panic among the security forces and the government army, forcing them to remain neutral and withdraw from their units. Al-Qaeda sought to establish an environment that facilitated their control over Hadhramaut Governorate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ALL CONFLICTING PARTIES

1. Stop all forms of violence against opponents and adversaries, especially physical eliminations.
2. Abandon force and use the constitutional and legal means to peaceably resolve disputes with opponents and competitors.
3. Conduct comprehensive and transparent investigations into all physical eliminations and disclose their results to public opinion.
4. Bring those involved in committing killings, assassinations and eliminations against opponents to justice.
5. Ensure the impartial application of justice to achieve justice for victims and their families.
6. Respect local and legal norms and legislation that prohibit and criminalize harming the lives of victims.

INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Document cases of physical eliminations committed during the war years and exert maximum efforts to preserve the rights of victims and their families.
2. Work seriously to prosecute those involved at all levels and ranks, ensuring that they do not escape punishment and demanding that the perpetrators be brought to justice.
3. Coordinate efforts with the relevant and specialized authorities to combat this type of violation and exert all pressure to ensure its reduction.
4. Exert necessary pressure on the parties accused of committing such violations to reduce them, urging them to respect the constitution and national legislation, and adhere to relevant international conventions.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

1. The UN envoy to Yemen, Hans Grundberg, and his office should utilize their full authority to exert necessary pressure on the perpetrators of these violations, ensuring the rights of victims and enhancing the presence of international protection for them.
2. Work toward the necessity of activating the role of international judicial bodies and utilizing their judicial and humanitarian jurisdiction to prosecute individuals involved in committing such violations, particularly those whose involvement has been proven and who have admitted to their actions in materials documented by international channels.
3. Conduct a transparent and in-depth international investigation into the crimes of physical eliminations in Yemen to document them, reveal the facts to local and international public opinion, and to bring their perpetrators to justice.
4. Exert pressure on the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen to cease political violence and bring the perpetrators of physical elimination crimes to justice





RIGHTS RADAR

WHO WE ARE?

Rights Radar foundation is a civil society organization for Human Rights, Non-Profit and Non-Governmental organization for monitoring, promoting and defending Human rights in the Arab world.

Founded by some Arab human rights defenders, and activists. Allocated for monitoring, documenting, and reporting violations against Human Rights, as well as providing advocacy, and legal support for victims and capacity building for human rights activists. It is focusing on all topics and areas of human rights, including freedom of expression, media and press freedom, women's rights, children's rights, disability rights, refugee rights, rights to justice.

Rights Radar working through a wide and professional network of reporters and monitors in the ground in most of the areas covered by its activities, using up-to-date techniques of monitoring and documenting human rights cases.

OUR OBJECTIVES:

- Monitoring and documenting violations against human rights in the Arab World.

- Providing advocacy and legal support for victims of human rights' violations.

- Networking and partnership with human rights organizations.

- Capacity building and leadership developing for human rights activists.

OUR VISSION:

Excellence in monitoring, documenting, and advocacy of human rights in the Arab world.

OUR MISSION:

A non-profit human rights foundation to defend Arab human rights and advocate their essential rights through monitoring and documenting violations, issuing statements and reports, networking and partnership with regional and international human rights organizations, as well as creating training and capacity building opportunities for human rights activists and leaders.

OUR VALUES

- Responsibility

- Credibility.

- Independency.

- Transparency.



OUR PROGRAMS

MONITORING

Rights Radar regularly monitors the human rights status and abuses in the Arab world, through local qualified monitors and reporters working to world-class standards and using cutting-edge techniques, as well as through collaborations with local human rights organizations that work in the same field with the same quality of work.

DOCUMENTING

Rights Radar documents human rights abuses committed by various parties, individual or collective, across the Arab world. Through a variety of approaches, we obtain material proof and documented evidence of the abuses of human rights to be used to bring the perpetrators to justice.

ADVOCACY

As part of our mission, Rights Radar provides advocacy and legal support, both material and moral support, for victims of human rights abuses in the Arab world, thanks to our capacity and expertise, and in collaboration with international organizations with complementary programs and aims.

NETWORKING

We achieve our objectives and goals through collaborating with a wide network of local, regional and international human rights organizations. Sharing experiences and working together, we drive outcomes and defend human rights through collective action and large-scale campaigns.

CAPACITY BUILDING

As well as defending human rights, Rights Radar is committed to training the human rights activists working as internal staff members as well as external organizations that share the same goal of defending human rights. Capacity building is a major part of our program and mission to improve human rights.



FIELDS OF FOCUS

Rights Radar believes the right to freedom of expression and justice, rights for women, children, people with disabilities and refugees are fundamental issues and represent the core topics of our work and activities.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

We advocate for freedom of expression to advance media freedom and public liberties, and promote its potential to play a vital role in developing democracy and protecting the public interest. We believe that democracy will not be fully achieved unless freedom of expression is guaranteed as a basic right.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Rights Radar promotes women's empowerment and supports their vital role and participation in society. We believe that society cannot reach its full potential unless women enjoy the same equal rights and opportunities as men, including education, health care, jobs, etc.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

We are working to enhance children's basic rights and assist them to fully enjoy their rights, including education, health care and protection. We look to children as our bright future, and this dream will not come true unless children are integrated fully into social development and public policies.

YEMEN: THE EXECUTION OF OPPONENTS

A Human Rights Report on the
Killing of Political Opposition,
2014-2024



