



Urgent Appeal to Uphold Justice for Journalist Ahmed Maher Ahead of Upcoming Trial

24 May 2024

Joint Statement

As the trial date approaches for the sentencing of journalist Ahmed Maher, who has been arbitrarily detained by the authorities in Aden since August 2022 for his journalistic activities, urgent attention is needed. Maher's lawyer, Sami Yassin Qaed Marsh, has recently issued a public statement highlighting the serious legal violations involved in Maher's case. The main points include:

- The security apparatus and the Specialized Criminal Prosecution (SCP) in Aden stormed the office of lawyer Sami Yassin, and confiscated and hid case files, including Ahmed Maher's file, which contains documents proving his innocence. The SCP arrested lawyer Sami Yassen in November 2023, further violating Ahmed Maher's right to legal defense.
- Maher was arrested without a judicial order, and the prosecution interrogated him inside the Dar Saad police station, which is the building of the accusing party, [in the presence of the police chief and his officers who previously tortured Maher](#).
- Maher is charged in connection with the bombing of the Dar Saad police station. However, the prosecution accuses others of this incident, while the charges against Maher are for spreading and publishing false news and forging identity cards to facilitate the passage of the accused. There is no connection between these charges and the Dar Saad police station bombing, and Maher had left the country before the bombing.
- The prosecution has failed to prove the allegations of spreading false news and forgery against Maher, and the SCP is not the authority responsible for investigating these charges. The prosecution relied on alleged evidence that has not been verified or presented to Maher, and the legitimacy of this evidence has not been disclosed, as the prosecution's investigation reports do not contain this alleged evidence.
- To date, the court has not heard testimony or evidence from Maher regarding his alleged torture and imprisonment. A reliable source familiar with the details of the case said that the prosecution ignored an order from the presiding judge to transfer Maher to a hospital for a medical examination to assess the injuries reportedly inflicted on him as a result of the torture.

[The Justice4Yemen Coalition](#) and all organizations signing this statement affirm that Ahmed Maher's case has become an issue of public opinion that requires immediate attention and action. Maher's case represents an important test for freedom of opinion and expression in Aden. Although his case has garnered attention from international human rights agencies, notably cited in [the report by the UN Sanctions Committee](#) issued in November 2023, no action has been taken to address the situation.

The undersigned organizations urgently appeal to the Specialized Criminal Court in Aden to uphold justice for journalist Ahmed Maher by releasing him in light of the grave violations in his case. We also urge the court to safeguard his legal rights during his upcoming judgment session scheduled for the 28th of this month, including the hearing of his evidence and statements.

24 May, 2024

List of Signatory Organizations:

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