



Torture Victims Remain Marginalized and Justice Elusive :Decade of War in Yemen

Joint Statement by the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition

June 26, 2025

Ten years into the war in Yemen, survivors of torture remain marginalized, with no investigations into violations, no access to compensation, and a glaring absence of justice. On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition reaffirms its firm commitment to combating all forms of torture, cruel treatment, and arbitrary detention in the country.

In 2025, the country has witnessed an unprecedented rise in human rights violations by all parties to the conflict. The continuing deterioration of human rights — amid waning local and international attention — raises grave concerns. This neglect further isolates victims and reinforces a climate of impunity.

Evidence documented throughout 2025 confirms that the Houthi group continues to pursue systematic policies involving arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances, particularly targeting humanitarian workers. In January alone, the [group detained eight UN staff members](#), including personnel from UNICEF and the World Health Organization—just months after a similar campaign detaining 13 others. These individuals remain forcibly disappeared, and have been denied contact with their families and access to legal representation, raising growing fears of torture and cruel treatment. In February, a staff member of the [World Food Programme died](#) while in detention in Sa’dah, prompting serious concern about the conditions of his imprisonment and treatment.

In response to this escalating repression, the [United Nations was forced to suspend all field activities in Houthi-controlled areas](#), highlighting the deteriorating environment for humanitarian work and the serious risks to aid workers’ lives.



Torture Victims Remain Marginalized and Justice Elusive :Decade of War in Yemen

Joint Statement by the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

At the same time, [Human Rights Watch’s 2025 annual report](#) confirmed that *all* parties to the conflict in Yemen—including the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and the internationally recognized government—committed serious violations. These included arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, and mistreatment of detainees, particularly in informal or secret detention centers.

Yemeni human rights organizations have documented numerous cases of enforced disappearance and unlawful detention, especially in Aden and Marib, where journalists, activists, and human rights defenders have suffered both physical and psychological torture.

A report issued by the [Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition](#) in March 2025 indicates that the civil and human rights space in Aden continues to deteriorate, amid intensified repression by security forces affiliated with the STC.

A report by “Women Journalists Without Chains” titled “[The Shadow War in Aden](#)” documented a systematic campaign of arrests carried out by the STC’s Security Belt forces and other affiliated units between December 2024 and May 2025. Journalists and activists were taken to secret detention centers, where some were subjected to physical and psychological torture.

According to a previous statement by the [Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition](#), 2,643 cases of torture were documented between 2016 and 2022. Of these, 2,446 were committed by the Houthi group, 150 by the STC, and 47 by the internationally recognized government. These figures reflect the systematic nature of torture across various detention centers, including the use of unofficial prisons and the denial of basic rights and due legal process for detainees.

These violations are not only committed upon men; increasingly, women are also subjected to abuse in detention amid troubling societal and institutional silence. Local and international human rights organizations—including members of the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition—have



Torture Victims Remain Marginalized and Justice Elusive :Decade of War in Yemen

Joint Statement by the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

documented repeated cases of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of women, particularly in Houthi-run prisons.

In its report titled “[Years in Hell](#)” the SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties (a coalition member) noted that detained women are often subjected to prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care, and both psychological and physical abuse. This includes threats of sexual violence and coerced confessions. The report confirmed that many of these abuses take place in unofficial prisons, beyond any judicial or human rights oversight.

These testimonies are further corroborated by a [UN Panel of Experts report](#), which documented incidents of sexual violence against female detainees in Houthi-run facilities—evidence of the deepening pattern of grave violations against women in detention.

In addition to the inhumane conditions of detention, the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition had previously warned, in its statement “*The Heavy Toll on Yemeni Women: A Statement on the Gender-Based Violence Crisis*” of the alarming rise in gender-based violence. This includes digital incitement, threats, and harassment targeting female activists, often involving religious and media figures within a context that reinforces systematic political and social exclusion of women in Yemen.

The continuation of such violations — amid the absence of an independent judiciary and a troubling level of international complicity or silence — entrenches a culture of impunity and directly undermines prospects for justice or lasting peace in Yemen.

In light of these facts, the signatory organizations call on the United Nations, the Security Council, and all relevant Yemeni actors to take urgent measures that ensure:

- The immediate and unconditional release of all arbitrarily detained individuals.
- Independent and transparent investigations — whether international or national — into cases of torture and deaths in detention.



Torture Victims Remain Marginalized and Justice Elusive :Decade of War in Yemen

Joint Statement by the Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

- The integration of accountability and combating impunity as core components of any future political settlement.

The coalition also stresses the importance of establishing an **independent and effective mechanism —national or international — that ensures the prosecution of those responsible for gross human rights violations and guarantees victims their rights to justice, redress, and dignity.**

The world's silence on torture, under the pretext of the conflict's complexity, amounts to complicity in injustice. Justice for victims is not a political option; it is a moral and fundamental condition for justice and reconciliation in Yemen.

Justice4Yemen Pact Coalition

June 26, 2025

- Abductees' Mothers Association
- Al Amal Women's and Sociocultural Foundation
- Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children
- Saba Marib Foundation for Social Development
- Accountability Organization
- SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties
- Studies and Economic Media Center
- Watch4HR – Human Rights Monitoring
- Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations
- Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism