



Justice4Yemen Pact
ميثاق العدالة لليمن

DT Institute

Free Media
Investigative Journalism



Perspectives of Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations on Transitional Justice in the Yemeni Context

Table Of Contents

Supporting Peace in Yemen through (SPARK) Programme	1
About DT Institute	1
1. About This Report.....	2
1.1. Methodology.....	2
1.2. Structure of the Report	4
2. Executive Summary.....	5
3. Conceptual Introduction to Transitional Justice and Its Place in Negotiation Processes	8
3.1. Core Components of Transitional Justice	9
3.2. Challenges in Integrating Transitional Justice into Negotiations.....	10
3.3. International Examples of Integrating Transitional Justice into Negotiations	11
4. Key Findings from Interviews with Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations....	13
4.1. Recommendations for a Future Process of Transitional Justice in Yemen	13
4.1.1. Guidelines for the Transitional Justice Process in Yemen	13
4.2.2. commendations for Long-Term Accountability in Yemen.....	15
4.3. Challenges of Transitional Justice in Yemen	16
4.3.1. A Large Number of Stakeholders.....	16
4.3.2. Impact of the Yemeni Conflict on Social and Economic Rights.....	16
4.3.3. Peace versus Justice	17
5. Analysis of Interviews with Yemeni Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations ..	19
5.1. Transitional Justice in Party Dialogues	19
5.2. Information on Transitional Justice in Yemen.....	20
5.2.1. Opinions of Interviewed Individuals	20
5.2.2. National Body for Transitional Justice and Equity.....	22
5.3. Perspectives of Interviewed Individuals on the Structure of Transitional Justice..	23
5.3.1. Victim-Centered Approach	23
5.3.2. Criminal Justice and Accountability Processes.....	27
5.3.3. Institutional Reform.....	30
5.4. Integrating Transitional Justice into Political Processes	31
5.5. The Challenge of Determining the Temporal Starting Point of Transitional Justice	33
6. Recommendations	35

Supporting Peace in Yemen through Accountability, Reconciliation and Knowledge Exchange (SPARK) Programme

This paper was written and published as part of the Supporting Peace in Yemen through Accountability, Reconciliation, and Knowledge Exchange (SPARK) program, funded by the DT Institute. SPARK aims to empower local communities and civil society organizations to better understand, apply, and develop transitional justice mechanisms, thereby enhancing inclusive community participation in the transitional justice process in Yemen, as a necessity for achieving sustainable national peace. The program works in close coordination with the Justice for Yemen Coalition (J4YP), a coalition of ten Yemeni civil society organizations advocating for justice, accountability, and peacebuilding for victims of human rights violations across Yemen. Under this program, SPARK partners and coalition members engage local communities and political actors in reconciliation and restorative justice initiatives, with the aim of strengthening their capacity to participate in transitional justice processes.

About DT Institute DT Institute

The DT Institute is a non-profit organization committed to the principle of «development differently.» It implements complex global development programs in conflict-affected, fragile, and closed environments and funds leading think tanks that stimulate innovation and improve people's lives through evidence-based programs. The Institute works in partnership with communities and leaders to build more resilient, just, equitable, inclusive, and democratic societies, and to ensure their sustainability.

1. About This Report

This report aims to examine the perspectives of political forces and civil society organizations, as well as a group of other stakeholders, regarding the transitional justice process in Yemen. The report is based on a core premise that collecting and analyzing these views contributes to generating scientific and knowledge-based insights that can be utilized to design effective future mechanisms for transitional justice, accountability, and redress, thereby enhancing the likelihood of success for transitional justice programs in the Yemeni context.

The report's objective is not limited to presenting findings; it also seeks to stimulate specialized and objective discussions accompanying the transitional process, fostering dialogue on the best ways to ensure the participation of key actors and those directly affected in decision-making.

1.1. Methodology

The report relied on **20 qualitative** interviews conducted with four of the most prominent Yemeni political parties, a sample of civil society organizations, and a selected group of victims, with a focus on reviewing their recommendations regarding preferred accountability and redress mechanisms within the framework of transitional justice.

At the political level, in-depth interviews were conducted with four prominent figures representing the Yemeni Nasserite Unionist Organization, the Al-Islah Party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, and the General People's Congress. The research team ensured interviewing party leaders reflecting the official positions of their political components to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the collected information, noting that no direct response was received from the Southern Transitional Council.

At the civil society level, interviews included ten diverse organizations, encompassing human rights organizations, youth organizations, and associations representing victims, distributed across several Yemeni governorates: **Taiz, Al Hudaydah, Sana'a,**

Marib, and Aden. The interviews also targeted six victims directly affected by human rights and international humanitarian law violations, aiming to integrate their voices into the data collection and analysis process. Despite efforts to secure the greatest possible diversity and representation, in terms of gender and geographical distribution, the research team faced field challenges that prevented full representation, reflecting the structural difficulties associated with working in the current Yemeni context.

The interview process employed an open approach combining multiple methods, enabling the collection of a wide and diverse range of information from participants, with a focus on exploring detailed aspects and contextual differences among various perspectives. The interviews included a mix of open-ended and structured questions, allowing researchers to elicit in-depth perceptions from participants while also collecting comparable and systematically analyzable data.

The interviews were designed to achieve a set of key research objectives, as follows: Deeper understanding of the concept of transitional justice in the Yemeni context.

Exploration of the priorities of political parties and target groups in the transitional justice process, to identify the main points of focus.

Identification of grievances and violations that should be addressed within the framework of transitional justice, whether related to the recent conflict or earlier historical periods.

Assessment of the role of victims and civil society organizations in the transitional process, and the extent of their active participation in shaping the process and its mechanisms.

Clarification of perceptions regarding economic justice and redress, including both material and non-material compensation.

The interviews were conducted using multiple means, including video communication applications such as Google Meet and Zoom, while some participants preferred to receive the questionnaire via email and respond in writing. The findings presented in this report largely reflect participants' views directly, granting the data a high degree of authenticity and making it representative of the actual perceptions of the target groups.

1.2. Structure of the Report

The report provides an in-depth analysis and systematic breakdown of the data and information derived from interviews conducted with victims, civil society organizations, and political parties regarding accountability and redress within the framework of transitional justice. It also examines their perceptions of accountability mechanisms, guarantees of non-recurrence, and the relationship of these issues to the political process and peacebuilding.

The report is organized under several subheadings reflecting the main issues raised by participants, including the grievances and violations of concern, victims' priorities, and the role of civil society in the transitional justice process.

In this way, the report combines the perspectives of victims and civil society on one hand, and the viewpoints of political parties on the other, in an attempt to provide a comprehensive and integrated picture of transitional justice in Yemen.

2. Executive Summary

Since the popular uprising in 2011, Yemen has experienced sharp political transformations that escalated into a full-scale war in 2014 and intensified in 2015 with the Saudi-led military intervention. This conflict has resulted in approximately 377,000 deaths, %60 of which were due to indirect causes such as hunger and preventable diseases, alongside the internal displacement of over 4.5 million people and the migration of around 3 million abroad, making Yemen one of the world's most critical displacement zones. More than two-thirds of the population require humanitarian assistance, while over 17 million people face food insecurity. This crisis has exacerbated historical grievances, such as marginalization and unequal access to resources, transforming Yemen from a poor state into a humanitarian catastrophe where millions live under deprivation and insecurity.

In this context, transitional justice is considered a strategic focal point in Yemeni political and social discourse, viewed as a central tool for victim redress, fostering national reconciliation, and consolidating state stability. This report is based on an analysis of the Yemeni context through a literature review and 20 qualitative interviews with representatives from four political parties, ten civil society organizations, and six victims. The research team ensured representation of the official positions of different political components, noting that no direct response was received from the Southern Transitional Council.

The interviews conducted for this report revealed broad consensus on the importance of transitional justice as a comprehensive framework comprising multiple instruments, including reparations, truth-telling, fairness and reconciliation, and ensuring victims' rights, thereby contributing to justice and political and social stability. However, nine participants indicated that implementing a comprehensive transitional justice process under current conditions requires preconditions, primarily: reaching a peace agreement or comprehensive political settlement, and adopting temporary phased steps that would pave the way for a more inclusive process after such a settlement. A representative of the General People's Congress stated: "Peace must be established

for transitional justice to be realized,” a position also echoed by leaders from the Yemeni Nasserite Unionist Organization and the Al-Islah Party. Conversely, the Yemeni Socialist Party emphasized that transitional justice discussions should accompany the peace process from its outset. Although reaching a comprehensive peace agreement is currently challenging, participants appreciated the efforts made by the Presidential Council’s Committee on Reconciliation and Transitional Justice, considering it the institutional framework most capable of hosting the transitional justice process at this stage.

The four political parties interviewed agreed that the most realistic step at this stage is to: raise societal awareness of the concept of transitional justice, discuss and develop the proposed draft law to ensure the engagement of political and societal actors, and foster public support to pave the way for a more acceptable future for transitional justice practices. However, according to all parties, these efforts remain tied to postponing actual implementation until favorable political and security conditions exist.

Justice emerged as a core demand during the 2011 protests, reflected in the Gulf Initiative, which established the National Dialogue Conference in 2013. This conference created a dedicated task force on transitional justice and national reconciliation between 2013 and 2014. However, the conference left a conflicting legacy and raised ongoing questions about whether justice should be an integral part of the political transition or a parallel, separate track. The interviews also revealed widespread awareness of tensions between the peace and justice tracks, as their respective orientations may not always align. While participants valued the National Dialogue Conference’s contributions to human rights, they expressed skepticism regarding the immunity law granted to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his government members, viewing it as an obstacle to accountability and undermining victims’ confidence in the process. Regarding criminal justice, political parties expressed caution toward judicial accountability. They emphasized the principle of no impunity as a cornerstone of transitional justice, while stressing that such accountability must be applied under specific conditions so as not to become a tool for political revenge or the escalation of conflicts. The process must be managed in a balanced manner to ensure victims’ redress while preserving opportunities for national reconciliation

and laying the foundations for future state stability.

Key Findings

There was broad consensus among participants on the importance of transitional justice as a comprehensive framework that incorporates multiple tools, such as reparations, truth-telling, fairness, reconciliation, and ensuring victims' rights.

- » **Preconditions for Implementation:** Most respondents emphasized that implementing comprehensive transitional justice under the current circumstances requires first reaching a peace agreement or comprehensive political settlement, along with adopting interim steps that can be implemented in the short term.
- » **Positions differed regarding the chronological starting point for transitional justice.** The Socialist Party focused on the period after the 1994 war, while the Nasserists called for encompassing all phases since the 1960s. The Islah Party considered 1994 the most appropriate date for building a shared national memory.
- » **Victims at the Heart of the Process:** Participants agreed on the need for any future transitional justice process to be victim-centered, including effective representation in the design of mechanisms, acknowledging their violations, providing them with material and moral compensation, and providing psychosocial support, particularly for children and youth.
- » **Criminal Justice:** Preferences varied between national, international, and hybrid courts, with parties emphasizing the importance of avoiding the politicization of accountability and its transformation into a tool for retaliation.
- » **Institutional Reform:** The majority of participants emphasized that reforming the justice sector and restoring judicial independence are essential for the success of transitional justice and ensuring the non-recurrence of violations.
- » **Peace and Justice Go Hand in Hand:** Civil society organizations believed that peace and justice should go hand in hand, not be presented as alternate or conflicting options, and called for the inclusion of victims' issues and human rights at the heart of ongoing political negotiations.
- » **Psychosocial Health:** All 20 participants emphasized that justice should not be limited to material compensation but should also include psychosocial support. Addressing the psychological trauma of war was seen as essential to understanding the intangible grievances that have left deep scars on society.

3. Conceptual Introduction to Transitional Justice and Its Place in Negotiation Processes

When violent conflict ends or a harsh authoritarian state collapses, both perpetrators and victims must learn to coexist again within their communities. This can be particularly difficult when the two sides are neighbors or members of the same group. The large numbers of people involved in violence, differing perceptions of who was right or wrong, and the presence of weakened state institutions all make the pursuit of justice and reconciliation highly complex. Nevertheless, it is important to have mechanisms through which crimes committed during periods of violent conflict can be acknowledged.

The international community, working with governments and civil society, often establishes courts or temporary commissions to provide victims with a sense of justice and to initiate a long-term process of recovery. Transitional justice thus emerges as a key tool for addressing the effects of internal conflicts and the grave human rights violations resulting from wars and armed disputes. It aims to rebuild trust among different segments of society through compensating victims, providing redress, and achieving national reconciliation, as well as addressing the psychological and social harm caused by prolonged periods of suffering and persecution.

Transitional justice is also considered a fundamental element of transitions from repressive regimes to democratic systems, as it provides a framework for accountability, limits the culture of revenge, and contributes to repairing collapsed conditions in ways that enhance comprehensive justice within society.

In the Yemeni context, the country has experienced over past decades a series of armed conflicts affecting both the north and the south and resulting in grave violations against civilians. Prior to unification in 1990, Yemen witnessed ongoing conflicts between political and military actors in the north and south, followed by the 1994 summer war that deepened internal divisions and increased violations. After the 2011 protests that overthrew former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, internal fighting broke out alongside Arab coalition airstrikes beginning on 26 March 2015, following the takeover of Sana'a and several governorates by the Ansar Allah (Houthi) movement

in September 2014.

This complex conflict background makes the implementation of transitional justice in Yemen a major challenge, given the devastating effects of successive conflicts on the social and political fabric, which have exacerbated social and political divisions and led to the collapse of judicial and oversight institutions—leaving civilians' rights vulnerable to ongoing violations without genuine accountability. The absence of institutional stability and sustained accountability has entrenched a state of persistent injustice, adding further pressure on the country's peace process.

Accordingly, transitional justice in Yemen represents a strategic necessity to provide effective mechanisms for social reconciliation, rebuild trust between conflicting parties, hold perpetrators accountable, compensate victims and redress harms, and rebuild state institutions—particularly judicial and oversight bodies. However, the continuation of political and military conflict and the absence of broad political consensus constitute major obstacles to effectively implementing transitional justice mechanisms, complicating peacebuilding efforts and prolonging the suffering of citizens who lack genuine justice and accountability.

3.1. Core Components of Transitional Justice

- » **The Right to Know the Truth:** This entails revealing the facts related to violations, identifying those responsible, and documenting historical events. This is often achieved through investigative or truth commissions that collect testimonies and evidence to provide a comprehensive narrative of the past.
- » **The Right to Justice (Accountability):** This concerns prosecuting perpetrators of gross human rights violations, whether through national or international criminal courts or alternative justice mechanisms, with the aim of breaking the culture of impunity and consolidating the rule of law.
- » **The Right to Redress:** This aims to compensate victims for the material and moral harm they have suffered, including financial compensation, physical and psychological rehabilitation, restitution of property, official apologies, and memorialization.

- » **Guarantees of Non-Recurrence:** These aim to prevent the repetition of future violations by reforming institutions (such as security and judicial sectors), reviewing laws, promoting a culture of human rights, and building transparent, accountable democratic institutions.
- » **Reconciliation:** This represents the process of rebuilding trust and the social fabric, enabling communities to coexist peacefully despite past traumas. Reconciliation does not mean forgetting violations; rather, it often involves community dialogues and peacebuilding initiatives.

3.2. Challenges in Integrating Transitional Justice into Negotiations

Efforts to integrate transitional justice into peace negotiations in Yemen face a complex and intertwined set of challenges. Years of war have produced a highly intricate political and security reality, characterized by multiple competing armed forces, divergent ideologies, and interwoven interests supported by external agendas. Despite UN-mediated truces and limited negotiation rounds, issues of accountability, redress, and victims' rights remain largely absent from the core of political negotiations.

Marginalizing transitional justice not only obstructs the justice process but also exacerbates the humanitarian crisis and deepens societal divisions, making the achievement of comprehensive national reconciliation and sustainable peace even more difficult. Despite its fundamental importance, integrating transitional justice into negotiations is fraught with **several key challenges, as identified by political parties and civil society organizations:**

- » **Prioritizing Peace over Justice:** Negotiators often focus on achieving a rapid peace agreement, even at the expense of justice issues. This approach can lead to the postponement or, in some cases, omission of accountability and fairness considerations.
- » **Resistance from Involved Parties:** Parties implicated in violations tend to resist integrating transitional justice into the negotiation process, fearing accountability or loss of political and military influence.
- » **Complexity of Issues:** Transitional justice issues are highly complex and require

specialized legal and human rights expertise. Negotiators may lack sufficient knowledge or the capacity to effectively address these matters.

- » **Lack of Trust:** A pervasive lack of trust between conflicting parties makes it difficult to reach agreements on sensitive issues such as accountability, redress, and guarantees of non-recurrence.

Despite these challenges, international experiences have shown that integrating transitional justice into negotiations does not weaken the peace process; on the contrary, it strengthens and sustains it, laying the groundwork for building more just and equitable societies.

3.3. International Examples of Integrating Transitional Justice into Negotiations

- » **The Colombian Experience:** Colombia represents one of the most prominent successful models for integrating transitional justice into negotiation processes. The 2016 peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) included a comprehensive transitional justice system, comprising a Special Peace Tribunal, a unit for the search of disappeared persons, and a Truth, Reconciliation, and Non-Recurrence Commission. This comprehensive approach helped build trust between the parties and ensured the rights of victims were recognized.
- » **The Northern Ireland Experience:** In the Good Friday Agreement (1998), elements of transitional justice were incorporated, albeit in a limited manner. The agreement included the release of political prisoners, police reform, and the establishment of human rights institutions. Although there was no official truth commission, these measures contributed to achieving sustainable peace.
- » **The South African Experience:** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa is considered a pioneering model in transitional justice. It was established as part of the negotiation process for the transition from the apartheid regime to democracy. The commission focused on uncovering the truth and promoting reconciliation, offering conditional amnesty to those who fully admitted to their crimes.

Part One

Key Findings From Interviews With Political Parties and Civil
Society Organizations



4. Key Findings from Interviews with Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations

4.1. Recommendations for a Future Process of Transitional Justice and Long-Term Accountability in Yemen

Interview participants emphasized the difficulty of advancing the transitional justice process under the current circumstances, given Yemen's fragmentation due to deep political divisions, obstacles to ceasefires, the ongoing negotiated peace process, and other constraints related to the political and security environment. Participants noted that many of the proposed measures would require significant time to yield tangible results and political gains.

The participants' perspectives were divided into two main groups: the first focuses on orientations that should shape the structure of Yemen's future transitional justice, while the second concentrates on recommendations for achieving long-term accountability. Both groups revolve around formulating a comprehensive Yemeni vision for post-conflict transitional justice capable of identifying priority goals and outcomes. Such a vision would assist the Yemeni government and international actors in supporting medium- and long-term accountability objectives and is essential for strengthening the capacity of Yemeni civil society organizations to advocate for and develop sustainable and effective justice and accountability programs.

4.1.1. Guidelines for the Transitional Justice Process in Yemen

When participants were asked about the issues that should guide a future transitional justice process in Yemen, several key elements were identified:

» **Victim-Centered Approach:**

Participants highlighted the importance of centering the future transitional justice process on victims. Measures should support the participation of victim groups and associations in dialogue and engagement processes. Participants emphasized that victims' roles are central in designing and establishing future accountability

and redress mechanisms in Yemen, ensuring that their voices and actual needs are represented.

Truth-Telling: Participants stressed the need to distinguish between truth-telling — documenting human rights and international humanitarian law violations — and accountability measures aimed at identifying and prosecuting perpetrators. While truth-telling can contribute to these objectives, its primary focus should be on publicly acknowledging the violations and the suffering of victims.

Equity: Equity was considered a fundamental element of a victim-centered approach. Twenty participants noted that equity includes financial compensation but is not limited to it; it should begin with the recognition of the violations or harms experienced by victims as a precondition before taking any other compensatory measures.

Mental Health Support: A significant number of participants emphasized that redress options should include psychological and social support for victims. Mental health was also recognized as a general need in Yemen due to the ongoing conflict. Some participants expressed particular concerns regarding the impact of violations on children and called for children and youth to be treated as distinct groups in future consultations on designing redress mechanisms, ensuring that their psychological and social needs are adequately met.

» Criminal Accountability Processes

Participants in the interviews did not express a definitive preference for a specific judicial mechanism regarding criminal accountability. Several options were proposed, ranging from national courts and international tribunals to alternative judicial mechanisms. Despite this variation, most participants agreed that any chosen option would be unfeasible unless supported by systematic efforts to raise legal awareness and enhance technical knowledge among various stakeholders, enabling Yemenis to understand the available alternatives and make informed decisions suited to their context.

At the level of political parties, positions demonstrated a degree of caution regarding criminal accountability. While they affirmed the principle of no impunity as a fundamental pillar of transitional justice, they simultaneously emphasized that

accountability should be applied under specific conditions, so as not to become a tool for political revenge or to inflame conflicts. The process should be managed in a balanced manner that ensures victims are treated fairly while preserving opportunities for national reconciliation and laying the foundations for future state stability.

» **Institutional Reform**

The ongoing armed conflict has significantly reduced the current capacity of Yemen's justice system to enforce accountability for human rights and international humanitarian law violations. However, concerns regarding judicial independence and the ability of courts to deliver justice fairly existed even before the current conflict. In addition, conflicts between multiple substantive and procedural laws and international standards further complicate the matter.

According to participants, institutional reform is a key component of transitional justice efforts in Yemen. They noted that implementing comprehensive institutional reform measures could substantially enhance the capacity of Yemeni public institutions to lead and execute future transitional justice efforts with the required level of effectiveness and efficiency.

4.2.2. commendations for Long-Term Accountability in Yemen

Yemeni civil society plays a crucial role in holding perpetrators accountable for human rights and international humanitarian law violations. However, it remains in need of international commitment and support to undertake deeper accountability measures, such as conducting investigations and expanding documentation efforts to cover new and concerning patterns of violations. The following are key steps for establishing sustainable and long-term accountability in Yemen:

» **Supporting Yemeni Civil Society Organizations to Expand Human Rights and IHL Documentation:**

Most of the organizations interviewed, as well as political parties, emphasized that documentation work helps identify violations and patterns of abuse, thereby contributing to a broader understanding of the conflict in Yemen. Since the work of Yemeni human rights organizations may prompt international mechanisms to initiate

investigations into specific cases, it is essential to support these organizations in documenting and expanding the scope of covered issues. This support is also critical for designing new, relevant tools and methods for information collection. The organizations interviewed highlighted that international and donor support is necessary to enhance their technical capacity for documentation, and some participants stressed the importance of deeper international engagement focused on accountability.

» **Supporting Yemeni Civil Society in Collecting, Preserving, and Analyzing Evidence:**

To address the gap between documentation and investigative work, states, multilateral institutions, and the donor community should support Yemeni organizations with sufficient resources, including capabilities and technology, to conduct in-depth investigations, collect, preserve, and analyze evidence at the required level for effective participation in various judicial forums.

4.3. Challenges of Transitional Justice in Yemen

4.3.1. A Large Number of Stakeholders

Most comments from the interviews focused on Yemeni actors involved in the conflict, highlighting the fundamental challenges in designing a comprehensive accountability and reparations mechanism. Such a mechanism must take into account a wide range of actors, including governmental and non-governmental armed groups, Yemeni and non-Yemeni parties, as well as public and private entities that contribute to escalating violence through financial transactions or commercial activities, increasing civilian casualties and causing extensive infrastructure destruction.

4.3.2. Impact of the Yemeni Conflict on Social and Economic Rights

According to participants, a broader understanding of the economic and social dimensions of the conflict in Yemen can help frame these issues within the scope of actionable harm. This understanding can also contribute to designing effective reparations processes and determining appropriate compensation options for victims. To achieve this, donors, states, and international organizations should invest

time and resources in developing systematic tools and methods for collecting data on the economic and social costs of the war. Such investment is essential to support the future establishment of fair and effective reparations mechanisms aligned with victims' actual needs.

The interviews raised critical questions regarding the dimensions of social, economic, and political inequality, as well as the nature of violations that could be considered litigable within the framework of transitional justice. The majority of participants emphasized that this framework should go beyond direct individual violations to also include social and economic harms resulting from the prolonged conflict, along with its cumulative impacts on critical infrastructure and livelihoods. Key examples mentioned by participants included rising poverty rates, loss of jobs and salaries, declining educational opportunities, and severe shortages in healthcare and social support services.

4.3.3. Peace versus Justice

Several participants underscored the urgent need to strengthen coordination between ongoing peace negotiations and efforts for accountability and victim redress. According to them, neglecting these linkages could undermine the prospects for genuine national reconciliation and weaken the foundations for sustainable peace in Yemen. Participants stressed that victims' issues must receive clearer and stronger representation within negotiation tracks, not to turn negotiations into a forum for grievances, but to ensure that the peace process is more comprehensive and aligned with principles of accountability and equity. The interviews also revealed limited awareness among many participants regarding the opportunities available for victim groups and affected communities to engage in processes led by the Office of the UN Special Envoy to Yemen.

Part Two

Analysis of Interviews with Political Parties and Civil Society

Organizations



5. Analysis of Interviews with Yemeni Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations

5.1. Transitional Justice in Party Dialogues

Discussions among Yemeni parties and institutions continue to focus primarily on conflict mitigation rather than engaging substantively in issues of transitional justice. To date, credible political understandings on how to manage this phase have not materialized, as political party representatives agree that initiating a genuine transitional process is impossible in the absence of a functional state and strong institutions.

This deficiency is closely linked to ongoing debates regarding the nature of the forthcoming political system, and whether Yemen will move toward a unified, federal, or even separatist state. Accordingly, any handling of transitional justice files cannot be effective without establishing stable and legitimate state institutions.

In this context, the Popular Nasserist Organization believes that opening past files in a fragile political and security environment may lead to serious risks, foremost among them increased cycles of revenge and renewed fighting. The party cites the Iraqi experience as a cautionary model highlighting the dangers of pursuing transitional justice processes before state institutions are cohesive. The Nasserists prefer to keep discussions in a preliminary and consultative framework, deferring practical implementation until domestic conditions stabilize.

The Al-Islah Party considers the launch of a national transitional justice project under current circumstances nearly impossible. The absence of a unified state, ongoing armed conflict, and multiple centers of military power operating outside constitutional and legal frameworks all render the formation of a national transitional justice body a postponed and currently unfeasible task.

Meanwhile, a representative of the General People's Congress explained that the Transitional Justice Committee within the Consultative Authority adopted an approach prioritizing reconciliation as a means to prepare the political and social groundwork, without neglecting the transitional justice track. To achieve this, a comprehensive

work matrix was prepared, including broad dialogue with political parties, civil society organizations, local authorities, and the victims themselves. The approach also envisioned launching community reconciliation campaigns starting at the village and district level and gradually expanding to the national level.

From a broader perspective, various political parties indicated that the most realistic steps at this stage include:

- » Raising public awareness about the concept of transitional justice.
- » Discussing and refining the draft law to ensure the engagement of political and societal actors.
- » Creating public support that paves the way for greater acceptance of transitional justice practices in the future.

However, according to all parties, these efforts remain linked to deferring actual implementation until suitable political and security conditions are available.

5.2. Information on Transitional Justice in Yemen

5.2.1. Opinions of Interviewed Individuals on the Legacy of the National Dialogue Conference

There is knowledge that can guide transitional justice in Yemen.”

Fifteen participants noted that the challenges faced by the National Dialogue Conference could serve as an important reference for guiding future processes and avoiding the repetition of past pitfalls. Four main groups of observations emerged during discussions, with the most prominent being the 2012 Immunity Law, which provided protection for former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his aides from prosecution for crimes and violations committed during his –33year rule.

According to a participant from Taiz, this law hindered transitional justice efforts from the outset and created serious obstacles to their implementation, stressing that any future transitional justice law must encompass “all crimes, all violations, and all perpetrators” without exception.

The National Dialogue Conference also faced internal obstacles that prevented it from achieving its objectives under the Gulf Initiative. It failed to achieve genuine

national reconciliation due to sharp divisions and historical conflicts.

One participant from Sana'a noted that political parties dominated most discussions, asking: "What space is left for us, the youth?" Another participant from Taiz indicated that while some outcomes were positive, excluding certain groups from active participation weakened the process and reduced its inclusivity.

Often, working group discussions became preoccupied with debates over historical grievances or formal procedures related to drafting the constitution and voting rules, rather than addressing substantive issues. Furthermore, several participants revealed a weak shared understanding of key concepts related to transitional justice and reconciliation, which led to repeated disagreements over the scope of issues to be addressed.

One participant from Sana'a stated that the main division centered on a fundamental question: Which conflict should the transitional justice law cover? The 1962 conflict, or subsequent conflicts? As a result, some groups focused on their own grievances while excluding others. Complicating matters further were the tight timeframes imposed for decision-making, which participants considered unrealistic given the complexity of the issues. More time should have been allocated to reach shared understandings of concepts and terminology.

Nonetheless, the experience was not without positives. Some participants praised efforts to raise awareness by leveraging previous international experiences and trainings organized between 2012 and 2014 with support from the United Nations and its partners to strengthen civil society capacity in transitional justice and reconciliation. A participant from Sana'a noted that these efforts helped establish a deeper understanding of concepts associated with transitional justice and political and democratic processes.

On the other hand, some participants argued that the structure of the National Dialogue Conference itself contributed to its failure, deepening divisions between the Hadi camp and its opponents, and allowing media to be politicized by parties without independent oversight mechanisms. This highlighted repeated calls to enhance the neutrality of civil society organizations as the most capable independent monitors.

In summary, participants emphasized that the experience carries important lessons for future processes.

One participant from Aden recommended continuing the work initiated by the National Dialogue Conference, focusing on two main aspects: first, ensuring broader representation of victims and affected communities in discussions; second, developing a comprehensive Yemeni vision for accountability, equity, and transitional justice.

A participant from Sana'a stressed that seriously addressing past issues is essential to prevent the reproduction of new cycles of conflict, violence, and violations, and that the absence of a clear Yemeni vision would render any settlement fragile and prone to collapse.

5.2.2. National Body for Transitional Justice and Equity

Several participants proposed the establishment of a national entity to lead the transitional justice process in Yemen. They emphasized that the success of such a mechanism would require proposals to emerge from the grassroots level upward, ensuring broad participation and adopting a consultative approach in shaping visions and future options.

Proposals suggested that this body include representatives from civil society, victims' associations, judges, tribal elders, political leaders, youth, and women. Participants stressed that leadership is a central attribute for members of this entity, who should possess strong professional backgrounds, practical experience, and strict ethical standards, such as neutrality and impartiality.

The participants also considered that this body could play a key role in engaging victims and affected groups in collective discussions regarding accountability and equity mechanisms within transitional justice. It could further contribute to the building of state institutions responsible for justice and mobilize public support for its outcomes.

One participant noted that society needs to prepare for the transitional justice phase,

emphasizing that raising awareness about it constitutes a fundamental step toward garnering public support.

In this context, sixteen participants put forward proposals to establish a similar entity to oversee compensation processes. A representative from a Hodeidah-based organization stated: “Equity is difficult, just as healing is difficult. The government tried, but it was challenging. Which authority would take responsibility? Would it be local or international? And who would lead it?”

According to participants, this body should be responsible for delivering both financial and non-financial reparations to victims and standardizing criteria for determining compensation in line with international human rights standards. It should also address related policies and strengthen frameworks within its mandate.

Shared concerns were raised regarding the future composition of this entity. Participants emphasized that it should include individuals with high academic qualifications, solid professional experience, and strict ethical standards. They also called for the creation of auditing and oversight mechanisms to ensure members’ independence and prevent them from falling into partisan allocation or corruption.

5.3. Perspectives of Interviewed Individuals on the Structure of Transitional Justice in Yemen

5.3.1. Victim-Centered Approach

Based on the shared views of the majority of interviewees, the transitional justice process in Yemen should be victim-centered. This means that long-term options must respect the victims’ rights to justice and reparations, as well as their right to know the truth about the violations they have suffered.

Future processes should give victims a central role in designing and implementing mechanisms. Victim participation is essential for restoring their human dignity. Interviewees described transitional justice as a journey from exclusion to inclusion, from ineffectiveness to effectiveness, and from invisibility to a world where victims can exercise authority and claim their rights.

One participant from Al Hudaydah stated: «Transitional justice can make people feel at the center of their world, even if it is their own private world, and that they enjoy rights and responsibilities, with the ability to innovate.»

Interviewees rejected ready-made approaches that do not take victims' participation into account in shaping processes and mechanisms. One example cited was the provision of reparations to victims without prior acknowledgment of the wrongdoing or violations committed, which several respondents considered «offensive» to the victims.

Truth-Telling

Interviews with political party representatives, civil society organizations, and victims revealed two distinct perspectives on the concept of truth-telling in the context of transitional justice in Yemen:

From the perspective of political parties, truth-telling is primarily associated with acknowledging the harm and wrongdoing inflicted on victims. This acknowledgment is considered the first step toward justice.

A representative of the Socialist Party explained:

«The process starts with truth-telling, which is a measure to provide justice to the victims. Then comes the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation, and afterwards we can discuss reparations.»

Other political leaders emphasized that any reparations provided to victims without this acknowledgment lose their value and do not contribute to building genuine reconciliation.

From the perspective of civil society organizations and the victims themselves, truth-telling is understood as documenting and verifying the facts of what occurred—essentially, «knowing the truth.» This emphasizes establishing the responsibility of perpetrators through fact-finding and documenting human rights and international humanitarian law violations, which is a prerequisite for accountability. For them, «accountability is extremely important, but it requires the truth first.»

Victims' Role in Truth-Telling

Participants highlighted that victims should act as both direct contributors to the

design of truth-telling mechanisms and primary beneficiaries of these mechanisms. Genuine and meaningful victim participation goes beyond merely hearing their voices; it grants them an active identity that helps rebuild trust and ensures that their experiences and suffering become part of the national narrative.

A participant from Aden emphasized: «Listening to the victims makes us think about peace, as well as how to convey what they have suffered to other audiences.»

Recommendations in this Context:

- » **Strengthen** victim-focused awareness through activities aimed at increasing knowledge about transitional justice and rights. One participant stressed: «Without this awareness, victims cannot progress.»
- » **Draw lessons** from comparative experiences in other countries, such as Morocco, Tunisia, and South Africa, to guide national efforts in Yemen toward effective truth-telling mechanisms and ensure victims' participation in them.

Fairness: Dignity as the Foundation of Justice

Interviewees' Perspectives on Fairness: «Dignity is the most important element for the actual presence of fairness.»

All 20 participants agreed that fairness is a fundamental component of any future transitional justice process in Yemen and a prerequisite for ensuring accountability that respects victims and restores their dignity. Their responses highlighted diverse understandings of what fairness could mean in the Yemeni context and its practical implications.

Key Steps Toward Achieving Fairness Participants' views coalesced around three core steps:

- » **Apology** and acknowledgment of wrongdoing as a complement to financial compensation.
- » **Rejecting** financial compensation alone as insufficient to address widespread grievances.
- » **Diversifying** forms of reparations to include economic and social measures such as salaries, employment opportunities, education, and healthcare.

Addressing Structural Inequalities

Some participants raised fundamental questions about the need for fairness measures to address deep social and economic inequalities that fuel cycles of violence and conflict in Yemen. According to this perspective, victims should receive more than recognition of their suffering; structural reforms addressing the root causes of conflict must also be pursued.

Non-Material Fairness: Psychological and Social Support

All 20 participants emphasized that fairness should not be limited to material compensation; it must also include psychosocial support. Addressing the psychological trauma resulting from the war was seen as essential to understanding intangible grievances that have left deep scars in society.

A participant from Taiz noted: «We must consider intangible aspects, such as the impact of the conflict on Yemenis' mental health.»

A participant from Marib added: «The level of trauma is profound, and recovery will take several years. Action must begin now.»

Children and Special Categories of Victims

Participants also highlighted violations committed against children, considering **them as falling into two main categories:**

- » Gender-based violence
- » Child recruitment

Twenty participants indicated that children, whether direct victims or relatives of victims, require dedicated psychological support as part of redress measures. From this perspective, some participants emphasized the need to treat children and youth as special categories of victims, deserving of greater representation and attention within transitional justice mechanisms.

From these views, it is clear that the concept of redress in Yemen goes beyond financial compensation to include: acknowledging wrongdoing and apologizing to victims; providing diverse material, social, and economic reparations; incorporating psychosocial support as an essential part of the redress process; and focusing on the most vulnerable groups, especially children and youth.

Thus, redress becomes a tool for rebuilding individual and collective dignity, addressing the structural causes of violence, and laying the foundations for genuine and sustainable reconciliation.

5.3.2. Criminal Justice and Accountability Processes

Interviewees' Perspectives on Judicial Mechanisms: «If a person is responsible, they must be held accountable.»

A variety of judicial mechanisms were considered to address violations. Four of the participating civil society organizations preferred international courts, two favored hybrid courts, and three believed national courts could be effective. Other participants did not focus on a specific judicial mechanism, sometimes emphasizing the purpose instead. Five victim participants considered criminal accountability as a core purpose of a judicial mechanism, though they did not provide further details on the type of mechanism that could serve this purpose.

Participants also distinguished between the role the national justice system could play in long-term transitional justice and its current capacity to investigate and prosecute perpetrators. This capacity has been severely constrained by the ongoing armed conflict in Yemen. Concerns about the judiciary's independence from political authorities and its ability to deliver impartial justice existed even before the conflict. While participants generally agreed that “if a person is responsible, they must be held accountable,” opinions diverged when other factors were considered, such as the types of violations, the perpetrators' nationality, and temporal jurisdiction. Several reasons explain this divergence: some participants lacked familiarity with the strengths and weaknesses of the various available options, and despite broader access to judicial avenues in human rights and international humanitarian law, current mechanisms offer limited capacity to pursue criminal accountability for violations related to the Yemeni conflict.

The positions of Yemeni political parties varied considerably, influenced by concerns about politicizing criminal justice and using it as a tool for political revenge—a concern rooted in experiences with the 2012 Transitional Justice Law, which was considered biased.

Yemeni Socialist Party: Believes criminal accountability should only apply in exceptional cases, such as preventing ongoing violations or obstructing law enforcement. Emphasizes alternative mechanisms such as public hearings for victims, perpetrator acknowledgment, and apologies, prioritizing restorative justice

over punitive approaches.

Al-Islah Party (Yemeni Congregation for Reform): Stresses that “no impunity” is a core principle of transitional justice but questions the willingness of political actors to accept prosecution of their leaders and members, citing the granting of immunity to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh in exchange for transferring power. They see transitional justice as achievable through:

Comprehensive reform of state institutions, **Preserving** national memory through documentation, and **Victim compensation**, ensuring redress and prevention of repeated violations.

Popular Unity Party (Nasserists): Advocates a “acknowledgment for amnesty” approach, while preserving victims’ individual rights to seek judicial recourse. Emphasizes comprehensive state institutional reform, particularly: **Judicial** independence, **Restructuring** security and administrative bodies, **Purging** institutions of individuals involved in violations and **Retraining** according to human rights principles and updating laws to prevent politicization.

General People’s Congress (GPC): Considers implementing criminal accountability in the Yemeni context challenging and potentially exacerbating conflict. Prefers practical alternatives such as national reconciliation, public apologies, and reparations to address violations effectively.

Perspectives on the “Collapse of the Justice System”

The judicial system forms the cornerstone for upholding the rule of law and protecting rights and freedoms. However, Yemen’s justice system has suffered from decades of accumulating crises, which have intensified since the outbreak of armed conflict in 2014. Many interviewees described the current situation with the phrase “the justice system has collapsed”, referring to the breakdown of both institutional and legal structures.

Manifestations of Structural Collapse: Twenty participants noted that Yemeni courts and the justice system face longstanding, deep-rooted problems, which the armed conflict has exacerbated to unprecedented levels. Most participants used the word

“collapsed” to describe the current reality.

One participant from Taiz explained that the collapse is **“total in every sense of the word”**, affecting infrastructure, accompanied by salary suspensions, and shortages of human resources and equipment.

Others viewed the collapse of the judiciary as inseparable from the overall collapse of the Yemeni state, emphasizing that rehabilitating the justice system first requires restoring the state’s strength and legitimacy, stating that **“people are keen to restore the state.”**

Politicization of the Judiciary and Lack of Separation of Powers: Judicial problems are not solely due to the ongoing war; they reflect broader systemic patterns affecting state institutions. As one participant from Taiz noted: “The problem is not in the sector, but in the system itself.”

Participants from Aden considered the judiciary to be politicized and effectively an extension of the executive branch, meaning there is no real separation of powers. According to their testimony, there is no truly independent judiciary, depriving citizens of meaningful access to justice.

Roots of the Crisis Before 2014: Several participants noted that many current challenges predate the events of 2014. Key issues include:

Lack of judicial independence, with one participant stating: “The human element in the judiciary is the most important but also the most risky.” **Absence of judicial neutrality**, as there are no truly impartial judges, and the justice system has become biased toward parties in the conflict.

Challenges for Judges During the Conflict: Despite criticism, some participants defended judges striving to maintain independence and neutrality under extremely difficult conditions. Judges face direct threats and restrictions on their work, alongside repeated attacks on the judicial system.

In some areas, judges have been denied salaries and publicly humiliated, undermining public trust in the judiciary.

A participant from Sana’a emphasized that the justice sector must be a priority in the transitional justice process, stating: “Transitional justice is also about reforming and rehabilitating institutions. Many institutions necessary to manage and lead the transitional justice process have collapsed.”

5.3.3. Institutional Reform

The opinions of interviewees indicate that reforming the justice sector represents one of the most urgent needs for the transitional justice process in Yemen. Courts operate in an environment where the influence of armed conflict actors continues to grow, leading to their politicization and partisanship, and often making them hostages to political forces. Parallel legal structures have further disrupted the functioning of the formal justice sector, while the judiciary has also faced additional challenges, including the emergence of unaccountable security shadow structures outside state institutions.

Several reasons emerged from the interviews highlighting the need for judicial reform. Fourteen participants emphasized the importance of involving the national justice system in transitional justice efforts to ensure a minimum level of domestic management of the process, thereby preventing its deviation from Yemeni realities and context. Some participants noted that engaging the national judiciary also contributes to the long-term sustainability of accountability institutions, even after the conflict ends. Early involvement of the judiciary helps counter the perception that justice and accountability mechanisms might be “imposed from outside” or result from foreign interventions.

In this context, one participant from Aden described the current situation as follows: «The situation for the courts worsened due to the war. There are many political interventions in the justice and judicial system. There is no real judicial independence, as if a parallel system exists in Yemen alongside the one that is merely on paper.» Despite the clear need for reform, the level of difficulties reported remains insufficiently detailed to design precise and targeted interventions. While some parallel judicial structures have already been established, the extent to which they rely on personnel from the formal judicial system remains unclear, and the degree of overlap between the formal and parallel systems is not yet fully understood. It is also not definitively clear whether the main challenges facing the judiciary stem directly from the armed conflict or are extensions of long-standing structural and systemic problems that Yemen’s justice system has faced for years.

Therefore, any constructive reform proposals require strengthening the evidence base, allowing for a more accurate and realistic understanding of weaknesses and gaps within the justice sector. This is a fundamental prerequisite for formulating practical and implementable interventions to support the judiciary and enhance its capacity.

On this basis, all participants agreed on focusing on institutional reform and strengthening the rule of law as central elements of any future transitional justice process. However, the success of these efforts depends on the extent to which they are grounded in reliable and accurate data, which is essential not only for analyzing the state of the judicial sector but also for understanding the constraints and opportunities that the judiciary in Yemen may face in general.

From the perspective of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah Party), the essence of transitional justice is to ensure that violations are not repeated, through institutional reform starting from the head of state and leading to the establishment of a state capable of guaranteeing rights and freedoms politically, economically, and socially. All political parties consulted generally agree with this perspective.

5.4. Integrating Transitional Justice into Political Processes

Research interviews indicate that integrating transitional justice into the Yemeni political process is an essential necessity that cannot be overlooked, whether to achieve accountability or to build sustainable peace. One participant from Sana'a noted that the Yemeni state must "stand on its feet again," a statement reflecting two key prerequisites for transitional justice: the existence of effective state institutions and the achievement of peace. While some participants emphasized prioritizing peace before addressing justice and accountability issues, the concepts of "peace" and "conflict resolution" in the Yemeni context have undergone a fundamental transformation due to the prolonged war and the likelihood of its long-lasting consequences.

From this perspective, participants from civil society organizations do not see peace and justice as conflicting options or sequential goals but as interdependent

objectives that should be pursued simultaneously. One participant expressed this view succinctly: “Peace and justice, not peace or justice.”

Based on this vision, civil society organizations stressed during interviews the importance of ensuring that peace talks are inclusive of transitional justice and human rights issues, rather than being limited to merely stopping the conflict or dividing power among the warring parties.

Several participants also noted that supporting Yemeni civil society in developing a clear vision for justice and accountability represents an initial and decisive step to ensure that these issues are incorporated into the political landscape, including formal negotiations.

In this context, the report recommends that the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen integrate focused discussions on transitional justice issues into its agenda. This would provide practical and meaningful consideration of justice and accountability in negotiations with various conflict parties, ensuring the effective involvement of active civil society organizations and reflecting the real needs of Yemeni society.

| From the perspective of political parties, participants agreed that peace is not only a prerequisite for transitional justice but also an essential condition for achieving national reconciliation. They emphasized that any pathway to reconciliation is impossible unless the conflict parties cease hostilities and adhere to the UN roadmap. At the same time, they stressed that a peace agreement alone is insufficient to achieve sustainable peace unless it becomes a comprehensive and well-established political process capable of addressing the roots of the conflict and preventing its recurrence.

Consequently, participants indicated that any future political process should allocate significant space for addressing historical grievances and include national reconciliation as a core objective. They did not propose ready-made models or uniform templates for addressing these grievances but emphasized that success requires a realistic approach grounded in local context and actual needs, avoiding the replication of foreign experiences that may not fit the Yemeni reality.

| In this regard, a representative of the Popular Unity Party (Al-Nasiri) noted that the timing of engagement in addressing historical grievances is critical, and it must

be conducted in a context and environment that ensure it contributes to enhancing reconciliation rather than undermining it.

Recommendations derived from these insights include:

- » **Integrating transitional justice into peace talks:** Political forces and civil society should discuss including transitional justice and human rights as central elements in political negotiations, rather than treating them as a subsequent or separate issue.
- » **Linking peace and justice:** Promote the understanding that peace and justice are interconnected goals that must be pursued concurrently, not as sequential or conflicting options.
- » **Civil society engagement:** Support Yemeni civil society organizations in developing a clear vision for justice and accountability and ensure their active participation in shaping political outcomes.
- » **Role of the UN Special Envoy:** Recommend that the UN Special Envoy systematically include accountability and fairness issues in the monthly agenda, reinforcing their presence in negotiations.
- » **National reconciliation as a central goal:** Any future political process should allocate space for addressing historical grievances and position national reconciliation as a core objective.
- » **Timing and local context:** Address grievances through a realistic approach based on the Yemeni local context and actual needs, with attention to appropriate timing to ensure it strengthens, rather than complicates, reconciliation.
- » **Ceasefire as a prerequisite:** To achieve genuine national reconciliation, conflict parties must commit to ceasing hostilities and implementing the UN roadmap as a foundation for any settlement.

5.5. The Challenge of Determining the Temporal Starting Point of Transitional Justice in Yemen

Determining the temporal starting point for transitional justice represents one of the most complex issues faced by the transitional justice team during the National Dialogue Conference. Each political current insisted that the process begin from

the historical period in which it experienced its most significant suffering, which resulted in sharp divergences among the parties. While some participants called for starting from 1948, others argued that 1962, the year of the revolution, was the most appropriate starting point. A third group suggested using the events of the 1978 Nasserist coup as a suitable point of departure.

This debate reflects a deeper issue: the economic and political costs of reopening all historical files. Consequently, the question “From which date should transitional justice begin?” remains unresolved and represents a significant obstacle to achieving any broad political consensus.

From the perspective of political parties, there is noticeable divergence:

The Yemeni Socialist Party focused on the post1994- war period, considering it a phase marked by widespread violations affecting state employees and property, including crimes of starvation and looting classified as economic and crimes against humanity. The party views this period as sufficiently justified to serve as the starting point for transitional justice.

In contrast, the Nasserist Popular Unionist Organization believes that transitional justice should not be limited to a specific period, but should extend to encompass the various stages from the September and October 1962 revolutions, through the subsequent conflicts in the north and south, to the Houthi coup in 2015 and the subsequent widespread crimes such as murder, torture, enforced disappearance, looting of property, and the bombing of homes.

The Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Al-Islah Party) argued that the most appropriate starting point is the 1994 war for two main reasons: first, it occurred under a unified state; second, going back further would complicate the construction of a shared national memory, in addition to the difficulty of verifying historical facts .

The General People's Congress (GPC) emphasized the need to agree on a defined timeframe, warning that reopening files dating back to 1962 or earlier would multiply complexities rather than contribute to national consensus or progress toward reconciliation. Thus, these proposals, despite their differences, reflect a structural dilemma in Yemen's transitional justice path: the broader the timeframe, the greater the potential for political and economic divisions; the narrower the timeframe, the more limited the inclusion of victims and accountability for perpetrators.

6. Recommendations

Based on the views and suggestions provided by the interviewees, considering the challenges and opportunities in the current Yemeni context, and in addition to the recommendations mentioned in the paragraphs above, this report recommends a set of practical measures that can form the basis of an integrated Yemeni vision for transitional justice and accountability. These recommendations target the international community, national governments, funding partners, and civil society organizations to support a realistic and effective transitional justice process in Yemen:

1. To Donors, Funding Partners, and the International Community

- » Provide technical and financial support to build the capacity of Yemeni civil society organizations to design and implement transitional justice and accountability initiatives.
- » Ensure international recognition of the Yemeni civil society's role by supporting the Office of the UN Special Envoy in adopting the visions and initiatives of these organizations and incorporating them into political discussions.
- » Encourage technical and experiential exchange with international experiences to broaden understanding of available transitional justice tools and adapt them to the Yemeni context.
- » Integrate accountability efforts into humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding programs to enhance sustainability and ensure alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

2. To the Yemeni Government and Political Parties

- » Reform the justice sector as a core component for sustaining transitional justice, recognizing that institutional reform is a long-term process.
- » Initiate systematic consultations with stakeholders, including judges and justice sector actors, to expand acceptance of an independent technical assessment.
- » Develop gradual institutional reform plans aimed at strengthening the rule of law and prioritizing reforms based on objective assessments of on-the-ground capacities.
- » Adopt a victim-centered approach in all government plans and policies by building direct communication channels with victims to understand their needs and expectations.

3. To Civil Society Organizations and Victims

- » Strengthen the role of Yemeni civil society as one of the few neutral actors, ensuring protection from harassment and retaliation so they can access victims and affected communities.
- » Launch legal awareness programs targeted at victims, civil society organizations, and stakeholders to increase knowledge of core transitional justice concepts and mechanisms.
- » Develop tailored awareness programs for victims on transitional justice as a preparatory step to enhance their participation in the process.
- » Conduct surveys and needs assessments to empower victims in forming a more consolidated collective position on accountability and justice.
- » Support the creation of independent coalitions and platforms for victims, enabling them to express their demands and actively participate in the design and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms.

These recommendations collectively aim to create a practical, inclusive, and context-sensitive framework for advancing transitional justice in Yemen, ensuring that victims' rights, accountability, and institutional reform remain central to the process.

Free Media Center | Free Media for Investigative Journalism

The Free Media Center is an organization that seeks to promote investigative journalism to create a new future for Yemeni journalism. Free Media focuses on digging up high-impact journalistic stories, prioritizing the quality of the material published on its pages rather than its quantity or speed of completion. Our focus is on issues that impact our society across all sectors: health, education, development, security, justice, human rights, women's issues, the environment, climate change, and corruption.

