



## Joint Statement by Yemeni Civil Society Organizations on the International Day of Education – 24 January 2026

Education is an inherent human right and a fundamental entitlement for every child without discrimination, in accordance with Yemen's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. In Yemen, however, ten consecutive years of ongoing conflict continue to systematically undermine this right, transforming schools from safe learning spaces into zones of danger, and placing an entire generation at risk of deprivation, dropout, exploitation, and violence.

According to the latest UNICEF estimates in "*Humanitarian Action for Children – Yemen 2025*", 4.5 million children are out of school, and 6.2 million children are in need of educational support. The country also faces high dropout rates linked to poverty and child labor, alongside the deteriorating capacity of the education system to remain functional. The same document reports that at least 2,424 schools have been destroyed since 2015, and nearly 200,000 teachers have not received their salaries since 2023, directly affecting the quality and accessibility of education.

Beyond structural collapse, education is subjected to grave violations, including attacks on schools and the military use of educational facilities. The "*Education Under Attack 2024*" report (GCPEA) documented at least 99 incidents of military use of schools during 2022–2023. In 2022, the United Nations verified the military use of 67 schools by parties, including the Houthis and the internationally recognized government, exposing students and teachers to danger and disrupting the educational process.

Reports on *Children and Armed Conflict* further confirm that the Houthis remain listed among parties responsible for grave violations against children—including child recruitment and the continued organization of summer camps that often target school students, effectively undermining education and pulling children away from schools. While we hold the Houthi group responsible for a wide pattern of violations affecting education and childhood in areas under their control, we also affirm that all other parties to the conflict bear similar legal obligations, and that violations—wherever they occur—must be prevented, investigated, and addressed through accountability without exception.



On this day, we reiterate that protecting education is not merely a service-related issue; it is a legal obligation and a prerequisite for sustainable peace. We also recall that Yemen endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in 2017, which requires concrete measures to prevent the military use of schools and to protect students and teachers.

### **The signatory organizations call on all parties to:**

- Immediately cease attacks on schools and all forms of violence affecting students and teachers, and respect the civilian character of educational facilities as protected civilian objects.
- Prohibit and criminalize the military use of schools, ensure their immediate evacuation from any armed presence or weapons storage, and uphold practical compliance with the Safe Schools Declaration.
- Protect children from recruitment and exploitation, and link this to concrete measures that keep children in education, while supporting protection and psychosocial support programs within schools.
- Adopt an urgent educational recovery plan to rehabilitate damaged schools, provide learning materials, and remove barriers to the education of girls and displaced children.
- Ensure teachers' rights and sustainably finance education through solutions that guarantee the payment of salaries, incentives, training, and capacity-building, while addressing the salary interruption crisis that undermines the quality and continuity of education.

### **Signatory:**

1. Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations in Yemen (YCMHRV)
2. Musaalah Organization
3. Al-Amal Cultural and Social Women's Foundation
4. Marib Dam Foundation for Social Development
5. Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism
6. Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children
7. Center for Economic Studies and Media
8. Human Rights Monitoring Organization
9. Association of Mothers of Abductees Organization



10. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties
11. Yemeni Network for Victims Associations (YNA)
12. Ayn for Human Rights Organization
13. Equal Rights & Freedoms Organization
14. Salam and Social Justice Organization
15. National Organization for Rights and Development
16. Equal Rights & Freedoms Organization
17. Mayyun Organization for Human Rights