



(Alaraby UK, 2018)

## Tortured Prisoners: Continued Human Rights Violations in Yemen by Houthis

September 19, 2019

Last week, the Yemeni Alliance for Monitoring Human Rights Violations published a report that confirmed the use of torture on prisoners held by the Houthis around the north of Yemen.<sup>1</sup> The human rights organization recounted over 450 cases of torture from September of 2014, shortly after the war began, until December 2018.<sup>2</sup> All of these cases were observed in prisons controlled by the Houthis, many of which may have been established after the onset of the conflict.<sup>3</sup> Those who were arrested include politicians, human rights activists, and journalists.<sup>4</sup> Many of these torture cases go underreported in local and international news, like journalist Anwar al-Rakan, who died two days after being released from a Houthi-held prison, in 2018.<sup>5</sup> Cases like this go unreported because the Houthis have “worked to eliminate

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sabanew.net/viewstory/53710>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1555606/middle-east>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1555606/middle-east>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sabanew.net/viewstory/53710>

<sup>5</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/news/yemeni-journalist-dies-just-days-after-release-houthis>

dissent and silence journalists”.<sup>6</sup> The staggering number of prisoners who were tortured over the four year period resulted in 170 deaths from torture, nine of which were children.<sup>7</sup> The Houthis ability to carry out such atrocities, without any repercussions from the international community only demonstrate further the severity of the human rights violations taking place in Yemen, and the complacency of the international community by not intervening.

At the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, in Geneva, the Yemeni-based human rights organization presented their findings, which also discussed the disappearance of more than 35,000 people in the last four years, in Houthi controlled areas.<sup>8</sup> While the United Nations noted in a press release on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September, there are a large number of potential war crimes committed by the many different actors in the Yemen conflict, they failed to outline proper measures which should be taken to ensure the end to these war crimes.

The implications of this report extend far beyond the findings of prisoners of war. Throughout the past five years of conflict in Yemen, millions have been impacted by the Houthis presence, and fighting with coalition forces. The ability of human rights organizations, even at the United Nations level, to resolve the thousands of individual cases of human rights abuses has failed.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.apnews.com/e32442a4c8c24acd9d362c433d5cd10e>

<sup>7</sup> <http://en.adenpress.news/news/13312>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=24937&LangID=E>

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