

Statement on Yemen

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Mr. President,

On 25 May, 17 Baha'is, including women, were gathered in Sana'a Yemen, for a religious meeting in a private home where they were discussing the affairs of their community and issues related to the well-being of the Yemeni society. Within minutes, 40-50 armed men stormed the house and arrested all the Baha'is present, including a youth and the parents of an 18 month old toddler. Most of them remain held incommunicado and their fate is unknown.

This is a real escalation in the way the Houthis are treating the Baha'is in that country. Baha'is are known for their religious principle of political non-involvement, not bearing weapons, and selfless service to their society, and this is well known to the Houthis, who must allow the Baha'is their right to peaceful assembly.

How can the Houthis believe that a lasting peace for Yemen is achievable without allowing all members of society to live side by side, contributing shoulder to shoulder to the wellbeing of their country? The response to our appeal for the release of the Baha'is has been a hate-filled sermon from the Grand Mufti of the Houthis.

Mr. President,

The Baha'is in Yemen want the best for their country, and should be allowed to gather peacefully. The international community must call upon the Houthis to release the detained Baha'is immediately and to stop this nonsensical persecution.

Special Rapporteur,

You, and your colleagues, issued a statement calling for the release of these Baha'is. Have you received any formal response from the Houthis?

Thank you.

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