

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND MINORITIES IN YEMEN

A REPORT THAT MONITORS AND DOCUMENTS THE REALITY OF
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND MINORITIES IN YEMEN DURING THE WARTIME

From March 2014 to September 2022

Published by the American Center for Justice (ACJ)

DECEMBER 2022



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THE INTRODUCTION

During long periods of its history, Yemen lived in a state of tolerance, goodwill and acceptance of the other. It also involved bloody sectarian conflicts in intermittent periods of history. The original inhabitants of Yemen before Islam embraced Judaism and Christianity, along with other religions. With the introduction of Islam in Yemen in the 1st AH (660 AD), Yemenis converted from followers of previous religions to Islam while a Jewish minority remains. With the establishment of the modern Yemeni state in September 1962 and the drafting of the constitution that considered Islam the official religion of the state, the Jewish minority enjoyed freedom of religion and the state's protection.

There are two sects in Yemen, the Shafi'i sect and the Zaydi sect, and they have coexisted side by side for decades. In the 1990s of the last century, an organization called the Believing Youth, Ansar Allah is often called "the Houthis appeared. They fought six wars with the Yemeni government that ended in their control of Saada Governorate in March 2011. They practiced persecution, forced displacement and looting of the properties of Jewish religious minorities in Saada and Amran governorates, as well as the Salafi group.

The Houthi group continued to expand and gradually took control of the governorates until they overthrew the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, at the end of September 2014. With the group's continued control and expansion, the pace of religious and sectarian persecution of those who disagree with them in religion and belief increased. The Houthi group seeks by all means to impose its ideology by enticement and intimidation on all Yemenis in the (12) governorates under its control, which has caused widespread violations of religious and sectarian freedoms and everything related to them.

The Houthi group was not the only one that committed violations of religious and sectarian freedoms. The Southern Transitional Council, backed by the UAE, is one of the parties responsible for widespread violations against mosque preachers, including assassinations, killings, arrests, displacement and others in the governorates under the control of the Council. In Taiz governorate, the Abu al-Abbas group committed violations against places of worship and archaeological shrines, and the internationally recognized legitimate government also carried out arrests on sectarian backgrounds, while Salafi groups affiliated with the UAE-backed giant brigades committed violations against religious objects and shrines in the districts of the West Coast. And in Hadhramaut Governorate, Al-Qaeda Organization (Ansar al-Sharia) committed several violations against ancient shrines and domes.

Through this report, the American Center for Justice (ACJ) aims to inform local and international public opinion about the reality of minorities and religious freedoms in Yemen, and the numerous violations they were subjected to freedom of religion, belief and doctrine during the war period. Moreover, the report is alert to the danger of the continuation of these violations and their immediate and future impact on the social and security fabric in the country, and calls for the immediate cessation of all violations, and the achievement of fair justice for the victims. We will address our report through two chapters:

Chapter One: Violations of Religious Minorities in Yemen

Chapter Two: Violations of religious and sectarian freedoms

THE METHODOLOGY

The American Center for Justice (ACJ) affirms its full commitment to the applicable methodology in accordance with international standards, the most important of which are transparency, independence, impartiality, objectivity, professionalism and confidentiality, and in accordance with the basic principles for which the center was established. In Yemen, which the Monitoring Team was able to access during the period of the ongoing war in vast areas in Yemen for more than seven years. During the reporting period, which lasted for a year and a half, the center conducted field visits through its monitors in more than one governorate in Yemen and conducted interviews with the victims and their families and listened to the testimonies of the whistleblowers directly or through social media and video communications if this was not possible. From interviews and contacts with those in charge of religious institutions and listening to them about the damages and violations that they sustained during the war period from all sides of the conflict in the country.



THE CONTEXT

For more than seven years, Yemen has witnessed a bloody conflict that has left thousands of dead and wounded from all segments of society, including preachers and imams in mosques. The war also caused religious minorities from the Jewish, Christian and Baha'i communities to be subjected to several violations, including killing, injury, arrests, enforced disappearance, torture, unfair trials and confiscation of property private displacement, forced displacement, and attacks on churches, as these violations were committed on the basis of religious discrimination of those minorities. The war also caused a great destruction of places of worship and their annexes of religious schools. During the war and until the date of writing the report, these conflicts resulted in a number of entities and groups besides the legitimate authority in the country.

Sana'a and the neighboring northern governorates, such as Saada, Hajjah, Amran, Al-Mahwit, Dhamar, Ibb, Al-Bayda, Raymah, and parts of the governorates of Ma'rib, Al-Jawf, Taiz and Al-Hudaydah, are under the control of the Ansar Allah (Houthi group).(1) Ansar Allah announced their commitment to all agreements ratified by Yemen through the group's response to the report of the UN team issued at the end of 2019.

The legitimate government, led by the Presidential Council,(2) controls Shabwa, Hadramout, Al-Mahra and parts of the governorates of Marib, Al-Jawf, Taiz and Hajjah.

The southern governorates of Aden, Lahj, Al-Dhalea, Abyan and Socotra Island are subject to the Southern Transitional Council.(3)

As for the districts of the West Coast, Bab al-Mandab Strait, and the Yemeni islands, Kumayun and Hanish, they are controlled by the joint forces.(4)

(1) The Republic of Iran stands behind the Houthi group politically and receives financial and logistical support from armed movements such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Popular Mobilization in Iraq.

(2) At the end of April of this year, President Hadi issued a decision transferring his powers to a presidential council consisting of (8) people headed by Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi.

(3) The Southern Transitional Council receives military, financial and logistical support from the UAE.

(4) The joint forces are a group of brigades, including the Guards of the Republic, the Tihama Resistance, led by Tariq Saleh, the Giants Brigades of Salafi leaders, and others from the people of the South, all of which receive direct support from the UAE.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

A number of international conventions enshrine the human right to religious, belief freedom, and the human right to declare the rites of his religion and to manifest the rituals of his faith day and night. Article (18) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that everyone has the right to freedom of religion and this right includes the freedom of the individual to change his religion or his belief and his freedom to manifest his religion or belief, worship and perform rituals alone or with a group of followers. It is also recognized by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 in Article 18)) on four articles that guarantee the human right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.(1)

All international and regional conventions and treaties have entirely guaranteed the right to freedom of belief, freedom to manifest religious rites, and protection of places of worship as an embodiment of this right. Article (16) of the Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949: hostility directed against historical monuments, artistic works and places of worship that constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples, or used in support of the war effort. This is confirmed by Article (56) of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Objects and Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict 1954 by saying, "It is prohibited to seize or sabotage installations dedicated to worship". Article (9-2-8) of the statute of the International Tribunal for Yugoslavia considered the assault on buildings designated worship is a war crime.

Article (19) of the European Convention on Human Rights stipulates that every person has the right to freedom of belief, and this right includes the freedom to declare religion and belief by performing rituals, whether alone or in meeting with others. It is also guaranteed by Article (12) of the American Convention on Human Rights by saying, "Everyone has the right to freedom of religion, and this right includes the freedom to maintain or change one's religion and beliefs."

The Yemeni constitution stipulates in its third paragraph that the state religion is Islam and that Islamic Sharia is the source of all legislation. The Yemeni legislator also punished in Article (259) of the Crimes and Penalties Law the death penalty for anyone who apostates from the religion of Islam "Anyone who apostates from the religion of Islam shall be punished with death after repentance three times and given a thirty-day grace period. If intentionality or persistence is not proven, and the offender shows repentance, then there is no punishment."

(1) Yemen joined the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants of political and economic rights and stipulated in its constitution in Article (6) that "the state affirms the work of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Charter of the League of Arab States and the generally recognized rules of international law."

THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of hard work done by the field research team of the American Center for Justice (ACJ) by monitoring and documenting many violations that affected religious freedoms in Yemen during the period between March 2014 and until September 2022, whose names we cannot mention for security reasons. ACJ is very grateful to these researchers for their courageous and tireless work, undertaken in the most difficult of circumstances, and without them, this report would not have been possible.

The American Center for Justice (ACJ) in this report aims to shed light on the extent of violations that affected minorities and religious and sectarian freedoms, and the danger of such violations on the social and security fabric in the country. The report also seeks to stop and put an end to these violations, which were committed by all parties to the conflict in Yemen in different proportions, with reference to specific violations solely committed by Ansar Allah (Houthi group). We based our report on accurate data collected during a scientific and methodological monitoring and documentation process by a group of qualified and trained monitors. The monitors conducted a series of field visits, inspections and meetings with imams of mosques and officials of the Ministry of Endowments in the legitimate government,⁽¹⁾ and listened to many victims, their relatives and witnesses. We were able to monitor and document many violations that we were able to access in most of the governorates of Yemen during the reporting period.

The report is divided into two chapters.

The first chapter presents the violations against religious minorities in Yemen, including the Jewish, Christian and Baha'i sects. These violations were based on religious discrimination. The statistics verified by the field monitoring team reveal the types of violations that initially affected:

The Jewish minority was subjected to several violations by the Houthi group, including arrests, forced displacement, looting of real and movable property, and closing of religious schools. Arrests amounted to (10) cases, school closures (2), forced displacement and looting of property for (64) victims of the sons of the Jewish community, who are considered one of the least minorities in the world, where there are only 6 people left in

(1) At the American Center for Justice, we contacted the leadership of the Ministry of Endowments in the Yemeni government during the period of preparing this report. We obtained official statistics of violations committed by the Al-Houthi group only against houses of worship, schools for memorizing the Holy Qur'an, and imams and preachers of mosques in a number of (17) Yemeni governorate. At the Center, we verified these statistics by field visits conducted by our monitors in the governorates. As for the Houthi group, we have communicated with them many times, but we did not find any cooperation in obtaining information about the violations that affected religious objects in areas under their of control.

Yemen after being subjected to forced displacement campaigns since the middle of the last century.

The Christian Minority: The report documents (10) cases of arrest and torture. The Houthi group was responsible for (6) cases, the military intelligence services of the legitimate government in Taiz was responsible of (3) cases, and ISIS was responsible of (one killing case). The killings violation the report documented is (7) killing, (2) storming and burning churches cases, committed by Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

The Baha'i minority has been subjected to several types of violations by the Houthi group, including arrests, torture, trials, confiscation of property, and forced displacement. The team verified the number of (71) cases of arrest, including (6) children and (20) princes, and (25) cases of unfair trials including death sentences and confiscation of property, (6) cases of forced displacement outside Yemen, and (9) cases of looting of homes and institutions.

The first chapter concluded with the violations committed by the Ansar Allah group against the Salafi group in Dammaj village, Saada governorate, which were based on sectarian discrimination. The center's team monitored and documented (1154) violations, including (199) cases of murder, including (29) children and (4) Women, while the injuries reached (599), including (71) children and (9) women. While (33) of its princes were subjected to abortion due to fear and bombardment with heavy weapons, and the siege on the village of Dammaj caused severe dehydration and malnutrition of (113) children, and (67) of them contracted lung infections. Civilian objects in the village were damaged by a number of (361) cases, including (6) mosques, (346) houses, (3) hospitals and (6) water wells. A thousand people from Dammaj residents and students of Dar Al-Hadith affiliated with the Salafi Group to several governorates in Yemen.

Chapter Two: Violations of Religious and Doctrinal Freedoms, and includes two parts:

The first section: Violations against imams and preachers of mosques, which consists of three parts:

A: Killings and Assassinations: The ACJ team documented and monitored the killing of 22 imams and preachers of mosques in the governorates of Aden, Abyan and Lahj, which are subject to the forces of the Southern Transitional Council, and in the governorates under the control of the Houthis. The team documented (8) cases, including murder and torture, and (2) Death sentences, and in Taiz Governorate, the Center documented the killing of (4) imams of mosques.

B: Arrests and Enforced Disappearances: The field research team documented (227) incidents of arrests and enforced disappearances, the Houthis were responsible for (171) incidents, the Southern Transitional Council (39) incidents, armed groups in Taiz (12) incidents, and the legitimate government in Marib (5) incidents.

C: The Dismissal of Mosque Preachers for Political Reasons: The Center's team monitored and documented (301) violations committed by the Houthi group in the governorates it controls and in Aden governorate, which is subject to the Southern Transitional Council. The center documented (41) incidents.

Section 2: Violations affecting places of worship in (8) paragraphs.

A: The Bombing of Mosques: The report documented the bombing of (27) mosques and (15) religious science schools in several governorates in Yemen by the Houthi group, which was alone in this violation to the exclusion of other parties.

B: The Demolition of Ancient and Historical Mosques: The report monitored and documented (17) incidents of violation of ancient mosques. The Ansar Allah group (Houthis) was responsible for (6) incidents, and the joint forces on the western coast were responsible for (5) incidents, and the Abu Al-Abbas group in Taiz (3) incidents, and al-Qaeda (Ansar al-Sharia) in Hadhramaut Governorate (3) incidents.

C: Shelling and Targeting Places of Worship: The coalition's bombing caused total or partial damage to (46) mosques in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Saada, Marib and Al Jawf, while the Houthi group bombed (79) mosques in the governorates of Taiz, Al Hudaydah, Marib, Al Bayda, Al Jawf, Hajjah, Aden, Lahj and Shabwa. .

D: Converting Places of Worship into Military Barracks and Prisons: The Houthi group was unique in this violation, as the center's team documented the group's conversion of (303) mosques into barracks, weapons depots and gathering centers for fighters in several governorates. The capital's secretariat had the greatest share of these violations. This violation was accompanied by another violation represented by the armed incursion of mosques by armed groups affiliated with the Houthis, where the center team monitored number of (211) incidents of violation in the governorates under their control.

E: Using Religious Platforms to Incite Violence and Hatred: The American Center for Justice monitored and verified (1,942) violations, as all parties to the conflict used religious platforms to incite violence, fighting and hatred. The Houthi group was responsible for (1,075) incidents of violation of (60%). The Salafi groups in the western coast account for (399) incidents, 23%, the Transitional Council in the south, (295), or 17%, the legitimate government for (138) incidents, or 8%, and the Abu Al-Abbas group in Taiz represents (35) incidents, or 2%.

F: Changing the Names of Mosques: The report monitored that the Houthi group changed the names of (36) mosques for political, ideological or sectarian reasons, and it was alone in this violation without the rest of the parties.

G: The prohibition and Restriction of Performing Religious Rites: This violation was unique to the Houthi group and practiced by preventing the religious rites represented as (Taraweeh prayers and standing in the month of Ramadan). We have observed a number of (411) violation.

H: Subjecting State Employees to Attend Compulsory Doctrinal Courses: In its areas of control, the Houthi group forces civil and military employees to attend sectarian courses to inculcate their beliefs in a mandatory manner and punish those who fail to be dismissed from public office. The American Center for Justice's team documented (1,113) incidents under this category of violation.

*** The report is concluded with a number of findings. It also made important recommendations for all actors in Yemen.**

AN OVERVIEW OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN YEMEN

THE GENERAL SITUATION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BEFORE THE HOUTHIS ARMED CONTROL OF SANA'A

Yemen experienced stable periods in its modern history, especially after the revolution of September 26, 1962, in which the language of sectarianism faded away until it was on the verge of disappearing permanently. The armed control of the Ansar Allah (Houthis group) is calm to an acceptable extent, in light of an acceptable coexistence between all sects and sects in Yemen. As for places of worship, they were sanctified and sacred, and all sects practiced their religious rituals without objection or prohibition from anyone. With the existence of disagreements between those sects, they reached the most quarrels and verbal exchanges with the escalation of religious discourse at times by the extremist groups that did not believe in the other. Rather, they issued fatwas of infidelity against all those who disagreed with them in thought or adopted an opinion in matters of religion and belief,⁽¹⁾ as they suffered. Religious minorities incitement against them, such as the Bohra and Ismaili sects, as a result of their religious beliefs.

THE SITUATION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS AFTER THE HOUTHIS SEIZED POWER IN A NUMBER OF YEMENI GOVERNORATES

With the Ansar Allah group overthrowing the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, by force of arms, at the end of September 2014; it took complete control of religious institutions. In addition, the religious discourse became not without spreading the spirit of hatred and sectarianism against their opponents and all those who disagreed with them. The Houthi group also blew up mosques, centers, and homes of their political opponents. With the outbreak of the current war in Yemen and the intervention of the Arab coalition in Yemen, the religious discourse of the Houthi group was more sharp and sectarian than before. It reached its peak in early 2015 when the Houthis called on their supporters in Sana'a to wage jihad in Taiz and Aden framing the conflict in the context of a holy war against those the Houthis considered their enemies in terms of religion rather than in politics. Around the clock, their radio stations broadcast an unprecedented sectarian discourse, calling their opponents "takfiris and ISIS."⁽²⁾ They also called one of their fighting brigades the name of Hussein as a religious symbol for the Twelver Shiites. This speech was matched by another hardline discourse by some armed groups in Taiz and the southern provinces calling to fight the Houthi group as Shiites and rejectionists.⁽³⁾

(1) At the beginning of the current century, religious references issued fatwas that journalists, activists and politicians are declared infidels for simply adopting opinions on issues of religious freedom. Rather, victims fell as a result of these extremist ideas and fatwas, including the Secretary-General of the Socialist Party, Jarallah Omar, who was killed as a result of the takfiri rhetoric of those groups.

(2) This name is given to the Islamic State organization that appeared in Iraq and Syria several years ago.

(3) Because of that abhorrent sectarian feeding, which was the product of the Houthi group's coup against power in the country and the overthrow of the legitimate government, thousands of victims fell.

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**CHAPTER ONE:
RELIGIOUS MINORITIES
IN YEMEN**

FIRST: THE JEWISH MINORITY

The Jewish existence in Yemen is considered since ancient times, and the Jews of Yemen believe that the beginning of their presence in Yemen dates back to the period of the rule of Solomon, peace be upon him. Under the protection of the state, with all rights, without any discrimination based on religion. Although Islam was not imposed on the Jews, they entered it in large numbers. Before their forcible deportation to Palestine, the Jewish community had approximately (15) schools and (19) temples in Sana'a and the same in Saada and Ibb.

The number of Jews in Yemen shrank a lot after their emigration following the establishment of Israel. The Jewish Agency, in cooperation with the British government, which was a colony of Aden, concluded a deal with Imam Ahmed Yahya Hamid Al-Din, **who was ruling northern Yemen in 1949, according to which more than (50,000) Yemeni Jews were deported to Yemen. Israel through a famous operation called (Basat Al Reeh).**⁽¹⁾ In 1990 the number of Jews in Yemen shrank, leaving only 5,000 thousand people. The home of the majority of them was in Sa'ada and Warida in Amran Governorate, where these minorities sometimes suffered from social and economic agitation due to the improved material situation of the Jewish community as a result. They receive it from the support of their relatives who have traveled to countries in Europe and Israel and established great business relations. They were assisting the remaining Jews in Yemen to preserve their property and identity, while their surroundings of the Muslim community were living in a state of poverty and destitution. The motives for the violation were based on religion because they were Jews and were subjected to a lot of abuse and robbery of their property by force. These reasons also contributed, albeit in a way. Simple immigration of Jews from Yemen.⁽²⁾

(1) Operation "Basat al-Reeh" is a process of displacement of the Jews of Yemen, which took place in a deal between the Jewish Agency and Imam Ahmed, the ruler of North Yemen. More than fifty thousand Jews were displaced during two years, 49, 50. This is the first incident of displacement that took place on a religious basis, and the Imam forced the Jews to sell their entire property of Real estate and movables and transferred to the city of Aden, and a camp was established for them by the Jewish Agency, then they were flown by American planes to the Palestinian territories. Despite the enormity of the incident, Operation "Basat al-Reeh" did not take its legal and humanitarian right to shed light on the violations suffered by the Jews of Yemen from several parties, namely the Yemeni state at the time, the Jewish Agency and Israel.

(2) The researchers of the American Center for Justice conducted interviews in the Republic of Egypt with Jewish individuals of Yemeni origin who immigrated at different times because of the reasons mentioned in the text.



Six years ago, only 200 people remained of the Jewish minority, due to the severe pressures and abuses exercised by the Houthi group against them. The group began its campaign against the Jewish minority since it took control of parts of Saada in 2006, and the governorate of Amran at the beginning of 2014. The displacement of these families from their original homeland hundreds of years ago, which prompted the official authorities at the time to transfer them to the tourist city in the Sheraton neighborhood, next to the American embassy in Sana'a.

The Yemeni Jews present in Yemen during this period represent one of the least minorities in the world, as their number became only (6) people, after they were exposed during the war period to waves of the increasing threat from the Houthi group who raised the slogan (Death to America .. Curse the Jews). They launched permanently expelling them from their country of origin.

The violations against the Jewish minority and the confiscation of their real and movable property on the basis of religious discrimination

2006

The Houthi group has displaced (7) families consisting of (57) individuals, most of them children and women from the Salem Jews, from their homes

2016

The Houthi group displaced (19) people of the Jewish religion in secret arrangements between the group, the Jewish Agency and the State of Jordan

ABUSES AGAINST THE JEWISH MINORITY

A: FORCED DISPLACEMENT

At the end of the year 2006, the Houthi group had taken control of Kitaf District, Saada Governorate, displacing (7) families consisting of (57) individuals, most of them children and women from the Jews of Salem, from their homes in the areas of Al-Haid Gharir in Kitaf District, after threatening them with death and confiscation of their property. These families resorted to the government complex building in the city, which was still subject to the Yemeni government at that time for a short period, and then they were transferred to the tourist city complex in the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, under the directives of the Yemeni government at the time. Those families were forced to leave their property from the homes and farms they inherited from their ancestors without any sin they committed except that they are of the Jewish religion. This is what makes the Houthis unable to coexist with an ideology other than the ideology that the group carries.⁽¹⁾

On March 21, 2016, the Houthi group expelled (19) persons of the Jewish faith in secret arrangements between the group, the Jewish Agency and the State of Jordan after their deportation through Sanaa airport,⁽²⁾ which is under the control of the Houthis. Those families arrived in Israel and were received by the head of its government and handed over to him a manuscript of the Torah, which is one of the manuscripts of the Jewish religion.⁽³⁾

(1) The report of the panel of experts commissioned by the Security Council in its latest report mentioned the systematic persecution of Jews in Yemen in areas controlled by the Houthis.

(2) The American Center for Justice made several calls with the Jewish families who were displaced from Yemen on a religious basis, but unfortunately, they have refrained from making any comment.

(3) According to the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, Tel Aviv paid the Houthi group money to be able to deport 19 Yemeni Jews from the capital, Sana'a, and that the operation was carried out with the help of Jordan and the coordination of the Jewish Agency for Migration.

B: ARRESTS AND TRIALS:

Libby Salem Marhabi - Kitaf District - Saada Governorate

He was arrested in mid-March/2016 by the Houthi group in Sana'a with (5) other people, including (3) members of the Jewish minority, on the grounds that they were accused of participating with a group of people from the Jewish minority during their displacement from Yemen to Israel in 2016 by smuggling a rare archaeological manuscript. It is made of deerskin, approximately (800) years old, on which the Torah was written that was smuggled to Israel. The victims were initially detained in the National Security Detention Center where he was subjected to torture and degrading treatment. After a period of arrest, the Public Funds Prosecution presented them before the court on charges of smuggling the Torah manuscript. On March 13, 2018, the Funds Court of First Instance in Sana'a, which is under the control of the Houthis, issued a ruling that sentenced him to two years in prison, while it sentenced three people from the Jewish minority to five years in prison. While the Appeals Division issued a ruling on September 22, 2019 confirming the initial ruling and releasing Libby Salem Marhabi due to the expiry of the sentence imposed. However, despite the passage of seven years since the arrest of the victim, he is still in prison despite the expiry of the sentence imposed by the court. Rabbi Yahya Yusef Al Salem spoke in a direct interview with Al-Yaman Al-Youm channel, which broadcasts from Egypt on March 30, 2022, that his cousin's imprisonment is illegal and that the trumped-up accusation against him is malicious. The Houthi group asked the prisoner's father and his family to leave Yemen in exchange for his release from its detention. Meanwhile, the American Center for Justice (ACJ), the lawyer for Libby Salem, Mr. Abdel-Baset Ghazi, confirmed to the American Center for Justice that the continued detention is arbitrary and outside the scope of the law, and it is not excluded that his affiliation to Judaism is the reason for his stay in prison.



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Despite the passage of seven years since the arrest of the victim, he is still in prison despite the expiration of the sentence imposed by the court, which confirms that his continued detention is due to his conversion to the Jewish religion.

Yemeni Rabbi Yahya Yusuf Musa Aal Salem

The rabbi was subjected to a series of violations by the Houthi group. These violations began on December 31, 2004, when his car and his house, located in the sub-district of Al Salem, Kitaf district, Saada Governorate, came under fire. This caused moderate damage to his house and car. At the beginning of 2007, the rabbi, along with the rest of the Jewish minority in Al Salem, received a written warning from the Houthi group to leave their homes and lands, leaving all their property and movable property.⁽¹⁾ At that time, during the era of former President Saleh, they were transferred to the residential city in the capital's secretariat. On April 20, 2019, Rabbi Yahya Youssef and his family members were arrested from his residence in the tourist city, accusing him of participating in smuggling the Torah to Israel. While his family confirms that the detention of the Houthi group is a punitive measure for his refusal to leave Yemen without any sin he committed, except for his adherence to his legal right to remain in his homeland. The rabbi was held in a prison in Amran governorate for more than a month and then left at the end of 2019 to Egypt due to strong harassment from the Houthi group, which forced him to leave his homeland.⁽²⁾ The field team of (ACJ) managed during the reporting period to monitor (10) cases of arrests of Jewish minorities in Yemen by the Houthi group based on religious discrimination.



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The rabbi, along with the rest of the members of the Jewish minority in Al Salem, received a written warning from the Houthi group to leave their homes and lands, so they left, leaving all their property, including real estate and movables, as the displacement occurred on the basis of religious discrimination.

No	Victim's name	Gender	Religion	Type of Violation
1	Libyan Salem Mousa Marhabi	Male	Judaism	Arrest, torture, unfair trial and still in prison
2	Yahya Suleiman Mousa Marhabi	Male	Judaism	unfair trial
3	Yahya Harun Zindani	Male	Judaism	unfair trial
4	Suleiman Yahya Yaqoub	Male	Judaism	unfair trial
5	Youssef Saeed Saeed Alnati	Male	Judaism	Detention + forced displacement
6	Youssef lives Al-Qarni	Male	Judaism	Detention + forced displacement
7	Saeed Saeed Alnati	Male	Judaism	Detention + forced displacement

(1) The incident (mass displacement incident) is based on religious discrimination.

(2) Rabbi Yahya Youssef, in an interview with Yemen Today Channel on March 30, 2022, mentioned several violations against the Jewish minority in Yemen by the Houthi group, represented by (the looting of their property in Aal Salem, their displacement to Sana'a, the closure of two schools for religious education for Jews in Raidah in 2009, and his cousin Libyan to illegal imprisonment and the end of their displacement from Yemen)

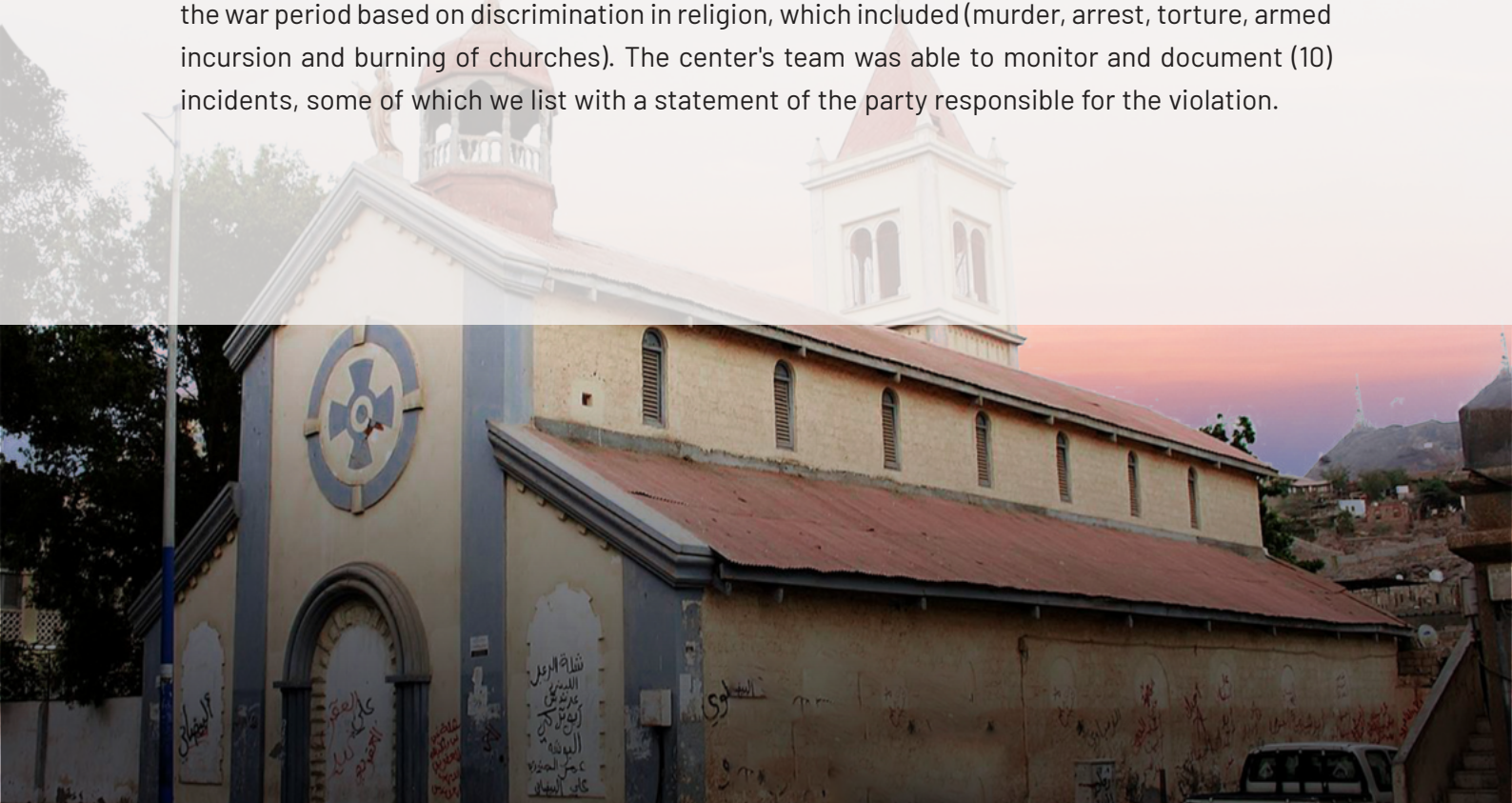
SECOND: THE CHRISTIAN MINORITY

The Christian community in Yemen is one of the religious minorities, and there are no official statistics available so far about the number of Christians in Yemen. However, according to special sources, they confirmed to us that the number of Christians in Yemen is up to (2000) people, and that (700) of them reside outside Yemen, and that their practice of rituals Religious rituals take place secretly as groups every week in the home of a Christian. Before the war, between 15,000 and 25,000 foreign Christians lived in Yemen, most of whom were Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees, in addition to temporary resident foreign students, Asian workers and members of diplomatic

700 A Christian residing outside Yemen

2,000 The number of Christians in Yemen

missions. There are Christian organizations and institutions in Yemen, including the American Baptist Mission, which owns the Jableh Hospital and the church attached to the hospital. Directly and extends its activity to Taiz governorate and cares for the poor, orphanages and women's prisons. There were also (5) churches in the city of Aden, three of which were Roman Catholic, one Anglican, and the fifth Orthodox. They were built during Britain's occupation of southern Yemen, and only two of them remained, one converted into a health facility and the other became a government building. The Christian minority in Yemen was subjected to several violations during the war period based on discrimination in religion, which included (murder, arrest, torture, armed incursion and burning of churches). The center's team was able to monitor and document (10) incidents, some of which we list with a statement of the party responsible for the violation.



VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN MINORITY IN YEMEN

The storming and burning of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Aden

The Church of St. Joseph was built in the nineteenth century, in the Crater district of Aden, and it is one of the few churches that still exist in the city, which was frequented by a number of Christian sailors and foreigners to perform their religious rites. On September 16, 2015, the church was stormed by armed men who set it on fire, destroyed the cross above it, and the cross inside. The center's field researcher in the governorate moved to the Crater neighborhood and listened to the testimony of witnesses in the neighborhood where the church is located. They said that the gunmen who stormed the church were wearing masks on their faces, but it is likely that they belong to Al-Qaeda.

The massacre of the elderly home and the killing of the nuns working in the home – Aden

On March 4, 2016, an extremist group consisting of (4) attacked a home for the elderly and the elderly located in the Abdul Qawi neighborhood in the Sheikh Othman district in the city of Aden. The attack took place at (8:30) on Friday morning, when the attackers claimed that they were going to visit their mother. The elderly woman in order to persuade the guard to open the main gate. As soon as they entered, they killed the (4) guards of the house, broke into the rooms of the building, and expelled all the house's (6) employees. Then they killed them all in the front yard of the house, using silenced weapons. The victims included two Catholic nuns from Rwanda and a monk from India, in addition to three Ethiopian women.⁽¹⁾ The gunmen kidnapped an Indian monk, while the nun Mary Sally survived the terrorist attack after she hid in the refrigerator room. Behind the door, she survived despite the room being searched three times and was transferred after the crime to Djibouti and then to India. Mary Sally, the supervisor of the nursing home in Aden, who joined the Charitable Society of Mother Teresa in June 2016 in Jordan,

(1) The victims of Ethiopian nationality were working in the elderly home in the field of hygiene.



”

They took out all (6) workers in the house, and then killed them all in the front yard of the house, using silencers. The victims included two Catholic nuns from Rwanda.



”

The crime is based on ideology because the victims embrace the Christian religion

wrote a written letter detailing the incident.⁽²⁾ None of the elderly was injured. The armed men also stormed the tent of meeting and the chapel inside the building and destroyed the statues and crosses. The Center’s field researcher in Aden conducted interviews with neighbors of the house, who confirmed that the motives for the attack were ideological, as the workers embraced the Christian religion, and that those behind the attack believed they belonged to the Islamic State (ISIS). The crime was widely condemned at the official⁽³⁾ and popular level in Yemen,⁽⁴⁾ and the nursing home is supervised by the charity mission, known in foreign media circles as (Dra Mother Teresa). It was established in 1990 and was run by the Ministry of Health and Population. In 2003, an agreement was signed between (Mother Teresa) and the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation under the agreement, the house relied on its full funding and internal needs on the mission, while the agreement included the nursing home in Sana’a, Taiz and Hodeidah.



Sister Mary Sally is the sole survivor of the crime

”

The gunmen stormed the meeting tent and the small church inside the building and destroyed statues and crosses. The center’s field researcher in Aden conducted interviews with the neighbors of the house, who confirmed that the motives for the attack were ideological.

A table of Christian victims of the armed intrusion into the elderly care home in Aden

No.	Victim’s name	Age	Religion	Nationality	Sex	Type of Violation
1	Father Ansim Ranchi	60	Christian	Indian	Male	Murder based on affiliation to Christianity
2	Margaret	44	Christian	Ronda	Female	Murder based on affiliation to Christianity
3	Regent	33	Christian	Ronda	Male	Murder based on affiliation to Christianity

(2) We at the American Center for Justice obtained a copy of that letter.

(3) The statements condemning the crime issued by the official authorities and others only dealt with the killing of the nuns without the rest of the Yemeni victims working in the house, such as the guard staff and cooks who were killed in the same attack.

(4) On March 5, 2016, al-Qaeda organization (Ansar al-Sharia) issued a written statement denying their connection to the nursing home incident, and pointed the finger at the Islamic State, ISIS. Then the Governor of Aden, Aidaroos al-Zubaidi accused the Houthi group of being behind the attack.

The killing of the Christian activist / Anwar Al-Wazir... Taiz

On Friday, the fourth of September 2015, an armed group of members of the so-called Guardians of the Faith, who are affiliated with the Abu al-Abbas Brigades, came to Anwar's house in the Al-Ikhwa neighborhood in Taiz city, riding a military vehicle and a motorcycle. Lunch with his wife and children, and when he opened the door, one of them shot him directly, then the other person got off the motorcycle and shot him again, and after confirming his death, they left the scene of the crime, and Anwar had posted on his Facebook a few days before his death Al-Qaeda threatened him with death, the center's field researcher in the governorate conducted interviews with friends and journalists who were related to the victim, where they confirmed that the killing was due to the victim's conversion to Christianity and accusing him of proselytizing in society and his intellectual activity.

The Kidnapping of the Reverend TOM UZhunnalil

An Indian Catholic priest, born in Kerala in 1960, a monk and member of the Missionary Charitable Society, has been working as a chaplain in Yemen since early 2016. He is the only priest who works in Yemen on a priesthood visa at St. Joseph Church in Crater. Because the church was stormed and burned by an extremist armed group in mid-September 2015, the priest transferred his work to the elderly care home in Sheikh Othman neighborhood. He was kidnapped from the house building on March 4, 2016, during the violent attack on the building and the killing of the nuns by ISIS. He continued to be kidnapped by the organization until he was released by the mediation of a country neighboring Yemen on September 12, 2017, and he returned to India after his release. He was quoted as saying (May God bless everyone, even the kidnappers, for all the good in their souls, as he made clear that ISIS gave him food and did not harm him physically).



”

Anwar posted on his Facebook a few days before his death that al-Qaeda threatened to kill him



”

After his release, he was quoted as saying (May God bless everyone, even the kidnappers, for all the goodness in their souls, as he explained that ISIS had given him food and had not physically harmed him).

The arrest of the Christian priest / Mosheer Khalidi

In the footsteps of the repression and abuse of religious minorities in Yemen, including Jews and Bahais, at the hands of the Houthi group, followers of the Christian faith enter that circle.⁽⁵⁾ On April 9, 2019, the group arrested the 50-year-old Christian priest Mushir Khalidi because of his religious affiliation. He remained in detention for three years and two months, during which he was subjected to various forms of torture and cruel treatment, his family was prevented from visiting him throughout his detention, and he left the country immediately upon his release. Later, the victim spoke to the American Center and told us part of the story of his arrest by saying (I was arrested on April 9, 2019 by the Security and Intelligence Agency of the Houthi group in the capital, Sana'a. The reason for my arrest was because I converted to the Christian religion and was subjected to various types of torture in order to change my religion, starting with solitary confinement, beatings with sticks, electric cables, slapping in the face, and hanging. Nevertheless, when I witnessed the severity of the torture of other detainees of the Houthi opponents, I felt like I was uttered.

And he added, a young man named Abu Turab was torturing me. One of the detainees told him: It is forbidden for you to accompany him. He is old. The young man replied to him (God will reward me for torturing him) considering that I am an infidel.

He also reported that the Houthis asked him to announce his repentance, reconsider his religion and return to Islam in exchange for his release and then return to my Christian religion, but I refused. I was released after 3 years and two months. It was a dark period in my life that it is difficult for me to forget because of the torture, ill-treatment and violation of human dignity I was subjected to.

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A young man called Abu Turab was torturing me. One of the detainees said to him, “It is forbidden for you to be attached to him, because he is old.” The young man replied, “God will reward me for torturing him.”

”

The Houthis demanded that I declare my repentance and return to my religion in exchange for my release

(5) The report of the team of experts assigned by the Security Council in its latest version stated on page 22 that it documented two cases of Christians detained by the Houthis on the basis of their religious affiliation.



He remained in detention for three years and two months, during which he was subjected to various forms of torture and cruel treatment, and his family was prevented from visiting him throughout his detention because of his conversion to Christianity.

Mushir al-Khalidi adds that the Houthi group has arrested another person because of his affiliation to Christianity, Muhammad Abdullah al-Khasib, who was arrested on November 14, 2021. Also, the intelligence service in Taiz Governorate, affiliated with the legitimate government, has arrested a number of Yemenis who have embraced the Christian faith, and they are:

No	The name of the victim	Gender	Religion	Violation type	Violator	violation date
1	Mohammed Abdullah Al-Khashab	male	hristianity	Arrest	Houthi armed group.	November 14, 2021
2	Bashir al-Bakari	male	Christianity	Arrest	Military Intelligence of the legitimate government in Taiz Governorate.	7/February/2022
3	Mustafa Salami	male	Christianity	Arrest	~~~~~	5/9/2022
4	Ali Abdul Jabbar Al-Sabai	male	Christianity	Arrest	~~~~~	5/9/2022

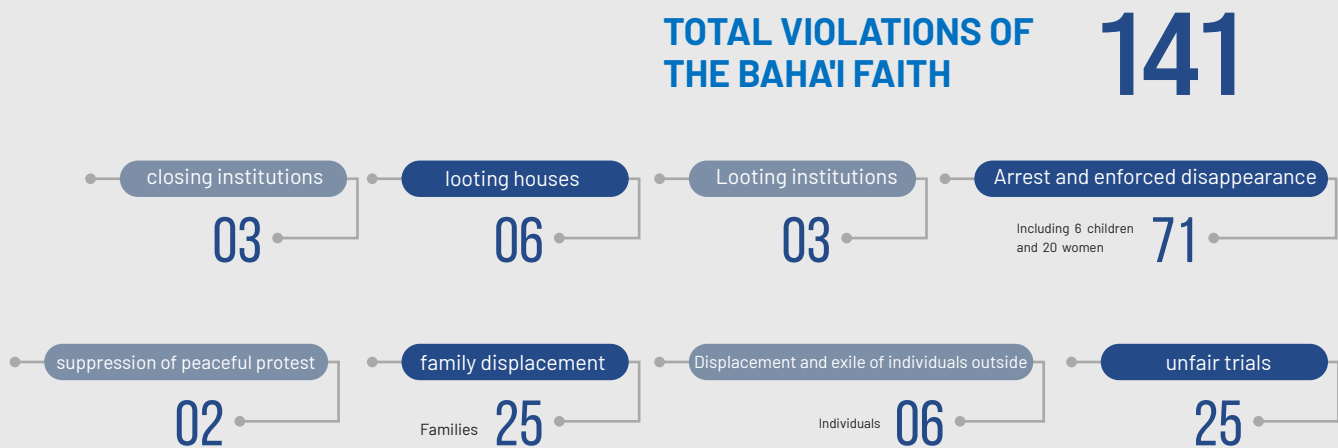
THIRD: THE BAHAI MINORITY

The Baha'i faith is independent of other religions. It reached the coastal areas and the Yemeni islands in the middle of the nineteenth century. A person called Al-Hussein Ali Nouri Baha Allah in Iran at the beginning of the nineteenth century founded it. Bahá'ís believe that Hussain Bahá'u'lláh is the Holy Prophet who will appear at this time to spread peace in the world. Baha'ís believe that all religions have one source, the Spirit of God, that all human beings are one nation, and that peace, coexistence, and spreading the values of love and peace are the essence of their religion. The Baha'i community has been known in Sana'a and some northern governorates for several years, but their presence has been kept secret, and they practice their rituals secretly for fear of being accused of infidelity and apostasy. The number of the Baha'i community in Yemen is approximately (2000) people, and their presence in Yemen was not known until the end of 2016, when the Baha'ís in Sana'a were forced to protest to denounce the repression and abuse practiced by the Houthi group against the followers of the sect.



VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE BAHA'I FAITH

With the Houthis' control of Sanaa by force of arms at the end of September 2014, they began to hunt down and persecute the followers of the Baha'i community.⁽¹⁾ They were subjected to several types of violations due to their affiliation to the Baha'i religion. Such violations includes arrest, physical and moral torture and ill-treatment, deprivation of the prisoner's rights to communicate with their families and meet their lawyers, raiding homes and looting property, closing institutions and loot their contents, preventing peaceful vigils and disperse them using violence,⁽²⁾ force families displacement for fear of Houthi oppression, trials that lack the minimum legal guarantees, and forced displacement.⁽³⁾ The American Center for Justice (ACJ) researchers in the field were able to monitor and document (140) violations systematically practiced by the Houthi group against the Baha'is, as shown in the following table:



(1) The Houthis have adopted a new book within the mandatory curriculum of Sana'a University under the title (The Arab-Israeli Conflict), which describes Baha'i writers as a Zionist movement.

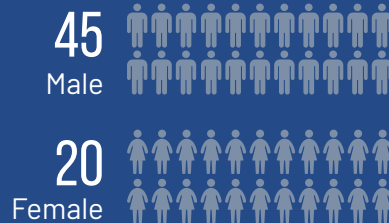
(2) On May 15, 2017, the Baha'is, along with a number of activists and sympathizers with their cause, carried out a peaceful protest in front of the State Security Prosecution in Sana'a to demand the release of the detainees. However, the member of the Public Prosecution, Rajeh Zayed, addressed the protesters, describing them as infidels and atheists, threatening to waste their blood and ordering the security guards to shoot the protesters and disperse them by force, which is what happened that day.

(3) In May 2017, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief, Ahmed Shahd, noted that the continuing pattern of persecution of the Baha'i community in Sana'a reflects the persecution suffered by Baha'is living in Iran.



A: ARRESTS

Since 2016, the Houthi group has arrested dozens of followers of the Baha'i sect, including (20) princes, (6) children and (45) men, on trumped-up charges and imprisoned them for more than four years without referring them to the judiciary. We mention, for example, the following:



Walid Saleh Ayyash

He is considered the continental official of the Baha'i case in Yemen. He was arrested on April 20, 2017 from one of the security points in Hodeidah. He was transferred to the Political Security prison in the governorate for a period of (45) day. Then he was transferred to Sana'a and was imprisoned inside a political security camp in the Shamlan area, west of Sana'a, for (8) months. Throughout this period, the victim was forcibly disappeared and his family did not know anything about his fate, then he was transferred to the Political Security prison, and was allowed to contact his family after a year of detention and enforced disappearance. He remained in detention for three and a half years. After that, he was referred to trial before the Criminal Court in Sana'a on malicious charges. In June 2020, the Houthi group took a decision to exile him along with (4) others outside the country on the grounds of their affiliation to the Baha'i religion, as the United Nations took over transporting them via one of its planes from Sana'a airport to abroad. After his release, the victim told PCHR monitors, "During his detention and disappearance, he was subjected to physical and psychological torture, beatings with sticks, electrocution, and placing him in solitary confinement for 6 months." The worst thing he was exposed to was that his jailers deliberately transferred him from time to time to the prison of Al-Qaeda and told them that he was a convert to the Baha'i faith, so they beat him so badly that blood flowed from his body, which was swollen from the severity of the beatings.⁽¹⁾



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The Houthi group took a decision to exile him, along with (4) others, outside the country on the grounds of their conversion to the Baha'i religion.

(1) In September 2019, the Human Rights Council issued a resolution condemning the Houthis for their persecution of the Bahais on the basis of their beliefs.

On 10 Aug. 2016, two Baha'i organizations (Al-Tamyze for Development, Call for Coexistence) held a training course for (67) people, including women and children from the sect and others, in Sana'a, with the aim of promoting peaceful initiatives for the development of the local community. On the last day of the event held at the Yemen Joud Foundation, the institution was raided by the Houthi group with (30) armed people. As soon as they entered, they drew their weapons and asked everyone to

lie on the ground, and then they took their phones and transferred them to a National Security prison north of the capital. During the detention period, they were subjected to very harsh treatment, and the Houthi group released the majority of them within a week of detention, while others remained in prison for several months, including Nadim Al-Saqqaf and his wife, who were subjected to several violations, the latest of which was forced deportation from the country.

B: DEATH SENTENCES:

On September 12, 2018, the Public Prosecution Office in Sana'a, which is under Houthi control, brought 24 Baha'is to trial before the Specialized Criminal Court on several charges, including communicating with Israel, the United States and Britain to harm the country's interest, as well as forging official documents and apostasy from Islam.⁽²⁾ The court issued a death sentence for one person, while the rest of the people are still pending before the court. Despite the issuance of an amnesty decision by the President of the Political Council in

Sana'a at the end of March 2020 against the prisoners, the court continued to try them. There is no justification for the continuation of the trial after the pardon decision is issued other than the Houthis' desire to confiscate their movable and real property. It was only a few months after the pardon decision, until the Houthi group took a decision to forcibly exile the Baha'i prisoners from the country.

(2) *The Houthis make the accusations against Baha'is of espionage, employment and apostasy a justification for the confiscation of their property and assets.*

Hamed Kamal Haidara

He was arrested in December 2013 by the National Security Agency while working at the Balhaf facility in Shabwa and forcibly disappeared for (9) months, and was beaten and tortured during that period. He was accused of being a spy for Iran and of recruiting young people to fight in the ranks of the Houthi group in Saada. After the Houthis took control of Sanaa, they replaced the charge of spying for Iran with spying for Israel. After four years of imprisonment, he was referred to trial, and the criminal court under Houthi control in Sana'a issued a death sentence for him. In March 2020, the Appeals Division upheld the death sentence, and the Public Prosecution issued an order for the compulsive arrest of his wife, but she managed to escape outside the country. In July 2020, Haider was transferred with five others from prison suddenly to a United Nations plane at Sanaa airport, and they were exiled outside Yemen because of their religious beliefs.

CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY AND CLOSING OF INSTITUTIONS

Since 2016, the Houthi group has confiscated real and movable property and money belonging to the Baha'i minorities, including an amount of \$53,000 that the Baha'i Fund official had during his arrest in August 2016. It also confiscated two homes in Sanaa and Hodeidah, one of them belonging to Nadim Al-Saqqaf, whose house was broken into and all its contents were looted during his imprisonment with his wife in the National Security Prison of the Houthis in Sana'a.⁽³⁾ The group also looted and closed three Baha'i institutions in Sana'a, including Yemen Joud and Nidaa.⁽⁴⁾

(3) The source is a research issued by the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies entitled (Baha'is in Yemen from Shadow to Persecution to Exile)

(4) The US State Department, in a statement issued on September 21, 2019, classified the Houthi group among the groups that violate religious freedoms, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda and Bok Haram.

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The Houthi group took a decision to exile him, along with (4) others, outside the country on the grounds of their conversion to the Baha'i religion.



\$53,000

”

Funds belonging to the Baha'i minorities that were held by the official of the Baha'i Fund during his arrest, and were looted by the Houthi group

C: EXILE AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

The fierce attack on the Baha'i minority continued from the top of the pyramid of authorities in Sana'a, with the strongest act of incitement. The leader of the Houthi group / Abdul-Malik al-Houthi described them in three speeches that they are Satanists and are waging a war against Islam and that they receive support from America and Israel and they must be eliminated.⁽¹⁾ In addition, the Criminal Prosecution issued orders to compulsively arrest (25) people, including (4) women, which prompted those (25) families to forcibly migrate from their homes in Sana'a to the south of the country that is under the legitimate government and then out of the country for fear of harm. Who will reach them if they stay in Sana'a. On July 30, 2020, the Houthi group took a decision to exile and forcibly displace (6) Yemeni citizens of the Baha'i faith who had been imprisoned in the prisons of the Houthi group for several years. They were taken from prison directly to Sana'a airport and were not left until after they were put on the plane.⁽²⁾ The displaced Baha'is had no other choice, either to stay in the prisons of the Houthi group and await the execution of death sentences against them or to accept exile and displacement, especially since the displaced do not hold any other nationality than the Yemeni one. While all their property and money are still confiscated for the benefit of the Houthi group.⁽³⁾

A table of Baha'is displaced by the Houthi group

No.	Victim's name	Age	Date	The reason for forced displacement and exile
1	Hamed Kamal Mohammed Haidara	50	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith
2	Akram Saleh Abdullah Ayyash	39	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith
3	Kiwan Muhammad Ali Qadri	46	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith
4	Badi Allah Mehdi Sanai	65	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith
5	Wael Ibrahim Mohammed Al-Areqi	42	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith
6	Walid Saleh Abdullah Ayyash	50	30/7/2020	Converting to the Baha'i Faith

(1) In his speech on November 27, 2017, on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday, a second speech on March 23, 2018, and a third speech on March 29, 2021.

(2) It is unfortunate that the displacement was sponsored and facilitated by the UN envoy to Yemen and under the auspices of the United Nations, on which the Yemenis depend to make peace in Yemen, ensuring the return of about three million Yemenis to their homes, the majority of whom were displaced by the Houthi group during the war that has been going on for more than seven years

(3) "The persecution and deportation of the Baha'is". Under this title, the report of the Group of Experts, in its third edition, issued at the beginning of this year, stated that six Baha'i sect members were victims of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law because of their faith. The violations included discrimination, arbitrary arrest and detention, ill-treatment, torture, denial of medical care and deportation. The Houthis expelled the six men from Yemen, while they preferred to stay in their country where their families reside, but their only option is to either stay in the prison of the Houthi group or be expelled from Yemen.

FOURTH: VIOLATIONS AFFECTING THE SALAFI GROUP IN DAMMAJ

Violations of the right to religious freedom carried out by the Houthi group were not limited to religious minorities of Jews, Christians, and Bahais, but also included the Salafist group, which is considered one of the Sunni groups, in addition to other groups. These violations included (siege, denial of food and humanitarian aid, killing, injury, targeting of civilian and religious objects, forced displacement), which were based on a doctrinal and ideological basis that the victims embraced a doctrine different from that of the Houthi group. These violations went through three stages:



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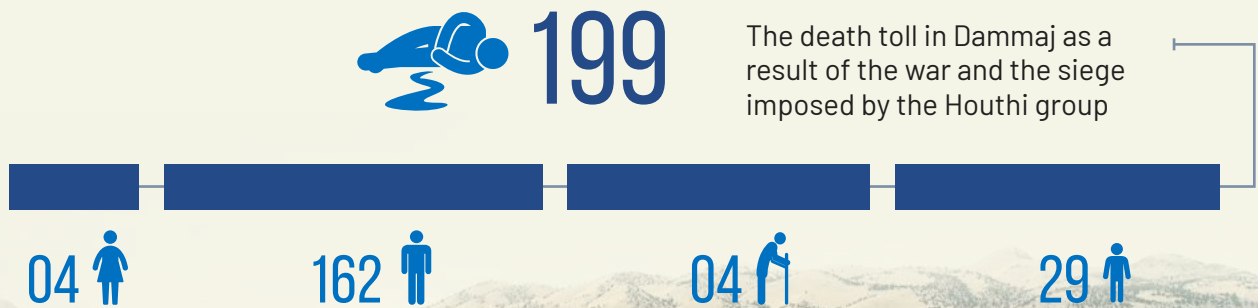
(Siege, denial of access to food and humanitarian aid, killing, injury, targeting of civilian and religious objects, forced displacement)

A: The first stage: the end of the year 2011

After the Houthi group took control of Saada in March 2011 and with all medium and heavy weapons and because the government was preoccupied with peaceful protests in 2011, the group imposed a suffocating siege on Dammaj village and violent confrontations erupted between the Houthis, who have all the means of force, and the people of Dammaj village, including them. Dar Al-Hadith students. In its three stages, 199 of the sons of Dammaj were killed, including students of Arab and foreign nationalities, and 594 were wounded, widespread destruction in civilian objects, and losses in the ranks of the Houthi group not announced. The war was stopped by tribal mediation headed by tribal leader Hussein al-Ahmar, and the mediation succeeded in lifting the siege on the village and introducing food and medicine, and the relative calm continued for two years.

B: The Second Stage: June 2013

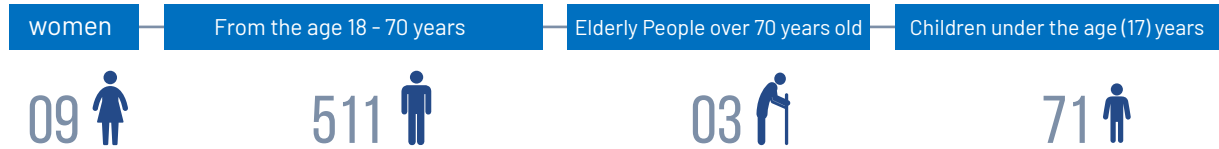
The Houthis began imposing a second siege on Dammaj, in violation of the agreements concluded with the mediation committees, and the siege and bombardment of Dammaj caused a severe humanitarian crisis. The Houthis prevented supplies and food from entering the village and prevented the wounded from getting ambulances to Sanaa. The bombing caused widespread destruction in the only rural hospital in the village. The siege and war on the people lasted for (7) months until the end of December 2013. The statistics of the war and siege of Dammaj village were as shown in the following table:



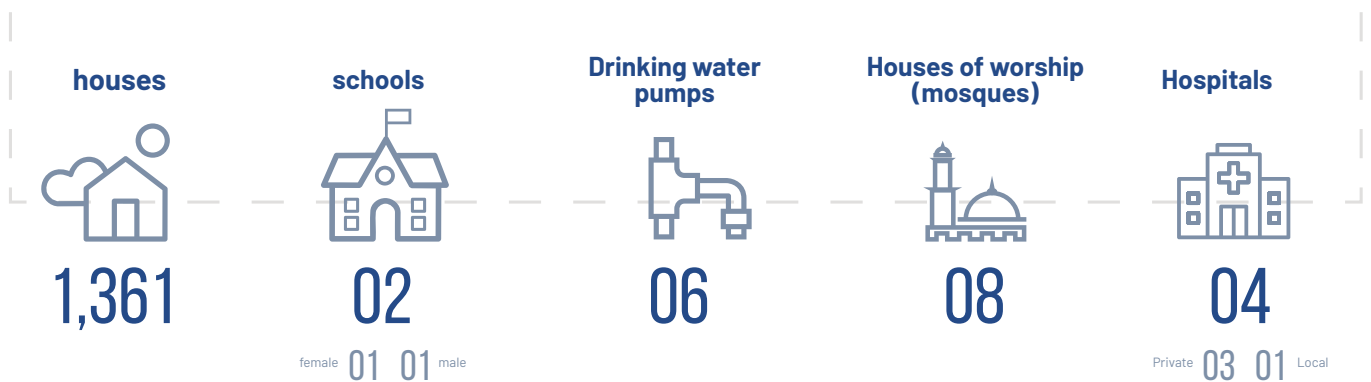


594

THE NUMBER OF WOUNDED IN DAMMAJ AS A RESULT OF THE WAR AND THE SIEGE IMPOSED BY THE HOUTHJI GROUP



The damaged public and private facilities in the village of Dammaj as a result of being bombed by the Houthi group



Examples of Child Victims:

1. Child Saleh Mohammed Mutlaq, 7, was killed by a sniper by the Houthi group on November 12, 2013 during their siege of the village of Dammaj.
2. Child Abdul Rahman Al-Haimi, 6, was killed by a sniper by the Houthis in early December 2013



C: THE THIRD STAGE:

January 2014 (the displacement of the people of Dammaj)

After (100) days of war and siege, the presidential mediation committees presented the people of Dammaj with two options:

The first: leaving Dammaj to preserve their lives. The second: staying under war and siege until death. The people of Dammaj, along with the students of Dar al-Hadith, chose the first option and were forced out of their homes.

On Thursday, January 16, 2014, the people of Dammaj were forced to leave and were displaced en masse, as the number of the displaced reached more than (5000) thousand people, the majority of whom were students of knowledge in Dar Al-Hadith. They were displaced to the governorates of Sana'a, Taiz, Aden and Marib. Modern Yemen is based on a doctrinal and ideological basis, as the incident is legally classified as a war crime according to the statute of the International Criminal Court.⁽¹⁾

(1) International law also defines forced displacement as the illegal eviction of a group of individuals or populations from the land on which they reside. It falls under war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, as it leads to the termination of people's attachment to life and the land in which they grew up and lived, and the resulting tragedies and suffering accompany them and their families throughout their lives.



CHAPTER TWO:

VIOLETIONS OF RELIGIOUS AND DOCTRINAL FREEDOMS

Religious freedoms of civilians in Yemen have been subjected to many violations, including the direct killing of imams and preachers of mosques. The violations included not only killing, but also arrest, enforced disappearance, torture and dismissal from work in public speeches and counseling, displacement, etc. Other violations targeted certain sects such as, the prevention of certain sects from their right to practice their own religious rites, targeting places of worship such as direct bombing, demolition and turning them into barracks and prisons, by all parties to the conflict in Yemen. While the Houthi group solely involved in committing violations. Thus, this chapter is divided into two sections, as follows:

Section I: Violations Affecting Mosques Preachers and Imams

Section II: Violations Affecting Worship Places

SECTION I:

**VIOLATIONS AFFECTING MOSQUES
PREACHERS AND IMAMS**





The killings of imams and preachers of mosques were committed on a sectarian and ideological basis based on the victim's embrace of a certain ideology.

22

Mosque preachers and imams were killed



2016

(11) were assassinated



2017

(7) were assassinated



2018

(4) were assassinated

mosque preachers and imams were assassinated in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, and Abya

A: KILLING IMAMS AND PREACHERS OF MOSQUES

The preachers and imams of mosques were not safe from the scourge of the war in the country. Dozens of them were killed, assassinated, or died under torture in the prisons controlled by armed groups in northern and southern Yemen on a doctrinal and ideological basis. The governorate of Aden, which is controlled by the Southern Transitional Council, had the highest percentage over other governorates in terms of the assassinations of preachers and imams of mosques. ACJ's researchers monitored the killing of (22) mosque preachers and imams.⁽¹⁾ In 2016, (11) were assassinated, in 2017, (7) mosque preachers and imams were assassinated, and in 2018, (4) mosque preachers and imams were assassinated in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, and Abyan. The assassinations were not limited to clerics only, but also affected civil society activists where these crimes were committed because of their opinions about religion and belief.

In northern Yemen, which is under the control of the Houthi group, number of (8) incidents of murder and torture were monitored and (2) death sentences for preachers and imams of mosques. In Taiz Governorate, the Center's researchers monitored (4) incidents of murder, at the hands of armed groups that were formed during the war in the country. We give, for example, the following cases:

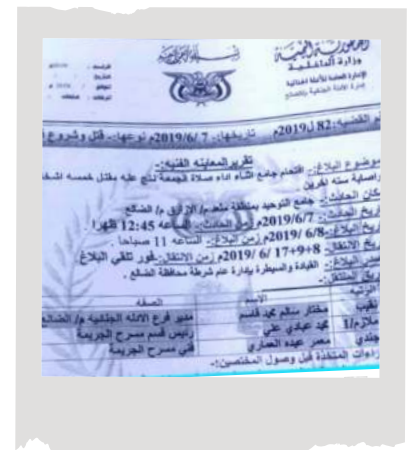
(1) In previous reports issued by the SAM human rights organization in Geneva, including the hidden killer, the finger of accusation in the killing of mosque imams was pointed at foreign and Yemeni armed groups used by the UAE in the assassinations that took place during the two years (2018-2019).

The incident of killing the preacher of Al-Tawhid Mosque and (4) other people in Al-Dhalea Governorate:

On June 27, 2019, (12) recruits on board of police vehicle affiliated with the Security Belt Forces in Al-Dhalea Governorate came to the village of Mathad in Al-Azariq District, while people were performing Friday prayers and began to spread around the mosque and shoot at its walls. As the people finished praying, the armed men stood at the door of the mosque, calling out for people whom they called wanted people to go out, and the worshipers replied that they were not present. They immediately opened fire on the worshipers indiscriminately, causing two deaths inside the mosque and wounding five others. They took a number of (6) worshipers at gunpoint and executed three of them by firing squad outside the mosque, including the preacher of the mosque Mohammed Muthanna Obeid, while they arrested (3) others and took them to the headquarters of the Belt Forces in Al-Dhalea Governorate. This crime comes with sectarian motives, as some of the victims belong to the so-called Hashemites in Yemen.

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This crime comes with sectarian motives, as some of the victims are affiliated with the so-called Hashemites in Yemen.



List of the Names of the Incident Victims

No.	Victim's name	Age	Occupation	type of violation	Notes
1	Mohamed Khaled Ahmed	39	Teacher	extrajudicial killing	Killed inside the mosque
2	Mohsen Khaled Ahmed	42	cattle dealer	extrajudicial killing	Killed inside the mosque
3	Mohammed Muthanna Obaid	40	Mosque preacher	Extrajudicial killing with sectarian motive	Shot dead outside the mosque
4	Abdo Saleh Ahmed	38	soldier	extrajudicial killing	Shot dead outside the mosque
5	Taha Abdullah Mohammed	50	builder	extrajudicial killing	Shot dead outside the mosque
6	Ahmed Hadi Hassan	35	Worker	He was hit by shrapnel in the back	During the shooting inside the mosque
7	Abdullah Ali Khaled	55	mosque mu'azzin	Shrapnel injury to the neck	During the shooting inside the mosque
8	Hani Hassan Khaled	26	Worker	ear injury	During the shooting inside the mosque
9	Ahmed Mohsen	45	Worker	Abdominal injury	During the shooting inside the mosque
10	Ahmed Mohammed Al-Daeri	33	Worker	Arrest	He was arrested for four days
11	Abdul Wahed Mohammed Hassan	30	employee	Arrest	He was arrested for four days
12	Ali Mohammed Ahmed	29	Worker	Arrest	He was arrested for four days

Samhan Abdulaziz Al-Rawi (imam and preacher of Ibn Al-Qayyim Mosque) Aden

On January 31, 2016, civilians found the dead body of Sheikh Al-Rawi in the streets of Al-Mamdara area in Aden. His body was mutilated. The victim was buried and the incident was recorded against unknown persons until its threads began to unfold little by little. At the American Center for Justice, we obtained a crime file consisting of (155) pages containing the defendants' confessions, blood guardian complaints, testimonies and photos of conversations between the defendants and the financiers of the assassination, and other important documents. We reviewed the file very carefully and concluded that the criminal prosecution in Aden had accused the three defendants (1. Helmy Jalal Muhammad Mohsen, 27, soldier 2. Samir Mahyoub Naji Ali, 22, soldier, and 3. Abdullah Abdul Rahman Hassan Al-Dubai, 22, Soldier) of participating in an armed gang that attacked a group of people, starting with planning, executing, and then assassinating imams. The three defendants deliberately killed the victim is the victim Samhan Abdulaziz Abdul-Malik Al-Rawi as mentioned in the accusation statement.⁽²⁾ By looking closely at the crime file, it became clear to us through the confessions of the first accused that he was related to Hani Bin Brik (Vice-President of the Southern Transitional Council).⁽³⁾ He met Mr. Brik several times, he was assigned to form a cell of (30) people to carry out assassination operations against what he called al-Qaeda members. Hani bin Brik set him the first target, Abu Salem, on the pretext that he is an emir of Al-Qaeda. Then, the accused met bin Brik later and was asked to change the target to the imam and preacher of the Ibn al-Qayyim mosque, Samhan al-Rawi.⁽⁴⁾ On the evening of the night of the assassination, the defendants lured the victim to a dinner at Al Kawthar Restaurant, which was his last dinner. Then they drove towards Al-Mamadara, the



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At the American Center for Justice, we obtained a crime file consisting of (155) pages containing confessions of the accused, complaints of blood relatives, testimonies and pictures of conversations between the accused and the financiers of the assassination, and other important documents.

(2) *Indictment Decision in Criminal Case No. (273) C C of 2018 the Specialized Criminal Prosecution in Aden and recorded by No. (1) C, C of 2019 The Criminal Appeal Prosecution in Aden*

(3) *Hani Bin Brik, a Salafi preacher who is closely related to decision-makers in the UAE and receives direct support from them. He posted on his twitter several tweets confirming his blessing for the assassinations of preachers, clerics and political leaders from different segments in the south, under the pretext of fighting terrorism.*

(4) *The testimony of the first accused, Hilmi Jalal Mohsen, in his statement, said that Bin Brik sent him a picture of the victim via WhatsApp to his phone, and the first accused showed these messages to the second and third accused, and informed them of the plans drawn between him and bin Brik.*

project road, near Al-Rashid School. The first accused took out a Russian Tata pistol, and fired a shot at the Sheikh's head and extended the chair and photographed the victim and searched his pockets and took his cards, papers and money in his pocket, and then they moved to the back road of the stadium and threw the body there. The confessions of the accused also stated that they returned to the administration and changed the car to another belonging to Salah bin Brik, the brother of Hani bin Brik, and handed him the first car.⁽⁵⁾ After that, they had received a financial reward from Hani bin Brik inside the coalition camp on the Al Buraiqeh road in exchange for carrying out the assassination. They also met Hani bin Brik and an Emirati officer named Abu Salama in one of the apartments in the Anma area, and they thanked us for the work we did to kill Sheikh Al-Rawi, and they were handed a list of (25) names of scholars, imams of mosques and politicians in Aden that are required to be assassinated⁽⁶⁾.⁽⁷⁾

(5) The defendants also admitted, in the records of collecting evidence and the prosecution's investigations, that they had received (4) pieces of a Russian Kalashnikov, which were distributed to them and delivered to them from Hani Ben Brik through his brother Salah.

(6) The file of the assassination of Sheikh Al-Rawi contains photos of the accused's WhatsApp conversations with Hani Bin Brik and Emiratis that prove their involvement in the assassinations that targeted clerics and politicians in the southern governorates. The file also contains pictures of a diplomatic bag full of money, which the defendants confessed that it was given to them in exchange for carrying out the assassination of Sheikh Al-Rawi.

(7) While we were preparing for the issuance of the report, the Criminal Court in Aden issued on October 2, 2022, a verdict that sentenced the three defendants to death, while ignoring the firm confessions in the case file against Hani bin Brik and the Emirati officer Abu Salama as financiers, instigators, and those who ordered the execution of the crime.

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In the confessions of the defendants, it was stated that they returned to the administration and changed the car with another belonging to Salah Bin Brik, who is the brother of Hani Bin Brik, and they handed over the first car to him, and that they had received a financial reward for carrying out the assassination operation from Hani Bin Brik inside the coalition camp on the Buraika road.



Shawqi Mohammed Muqbel Kamadi (the Imam and Preacher of Thawar Mosque - Al Mualla - Aden)

Shawqi Kamadi is considered one of the social and educational figures, as well as the preacher and imam of the Thawar Mosque in the Mualla District, Aden Governorate. He is widely accepted in his community and is considered a social reformer and a highly influential figure among those around him. His assassination was preceded by a large media incitement campaign against him on websites affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council. On February 14, 2018, after Shawqi left his home to his workplace in Marib High School in Mualla, he was pursued by an armed group on board a car and a motorbike. Before he reached the school, the perpetrators shot him directly until he lost control of his car and hit a nearby wall. They got down and confirmed his death, photographed his body and left the crime scene calmly.⁽⁸⁾ Eyewitnesses confirmed to ACJ that at the time of the assassination of the victim, there was a heavy security presence in the square within the scope of the assassination with police vehicles and motorbikes.⁽⁹⁾ One of the witnesses has identified the perpetrator of the assassination, who works as an escort for one of the security leaders of the Transitional Council in Aden.⁽¹⁰⁾



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His assassination was preceded by a large media incitement campaign on sites belonging to the Southern Transitional Council

(8) The American Center for Justice is aware not to disclose the identities of the witnesses for fear of harm, especially when they live in the city of Aden.

(9) To cover the crime of assassinations that targeted preachers, teachers and academics in the southern governorates, the Southern Transitional Council before announced the arrest of a cell consisting of (14) people called the assassination cell. After the disappearance and arrest of these individuals for several years in the prison called (Waddah Al-Yaman), they were referred to the judiciary on charges of carrying out the assassinations to the preachers and imams of mosques. On August 22, 2022, the Criminal Court in Aden issued a ruling that acquitted them all of the accusation against them and decided to release them immediately, which confirms that the detainees are nothing but victims who hid and disappeared for years, and then they were accused of the assassination cell while they are innocent.

(10) The assassination of Shawki Kamadi shook popular and official public opinion, and dozens of statements were issued condemning the crime. As for the security authorities, they contented themselves with going to the crime scene, submitting an inspection report, handing the body over to the victim's family, and instructing them to quickly bury him. The victim was buried in the afternoon of the incident and the case of his assassination was buried with him. The security and judicial authorities did not open any investigation into the crime, which raises a question mark about who has an interest in burying the assassination files of mosque imams, preachers, teachers and others in Aden Governorate. In Aden, these crimes were directed at a particular faction because of its political or sectarian affiliation, such as the Islah Party and the moderate Salafi group who represent the moderate Islamic trend.

Omar Abdullah Dawkam

(the Imam and Preacher of Al-Esayi Mosque in Taiz)

The people of Dawkam's city used to call him with several titles (the professor, the politician, the activist, the writer, the preacher, the intellectual, the author, and the symbol of enlightenment, dialogue and tolerance). In light of insecurity state in the city of Taiz, which has been witnessing a brutal war and an unjust siege for seven years by the Houthi group, on Friday, March 30, 2018, after Omar Dawkam left the mosque, accompanied by his friend Rafiq Al-Akhali, were attacked by unknown armed men riding a motorcycle. This incident caused the death of his friend on the spot, while Omar was taken to Al-Rawdha Hospital and he died of his injuries on Monday, April 2, 2018. His body was buried at Al-Saeed cemetery, with the participation of thousands of people from the city of Taiz. The assassination was widely condemned at the popular and official levels. The Center's field researchers who reviewed the file of the victim's assassination observed that the police opened an investigation after the incident and conducted several investigations, but no suspect in the assassination was referred to the judiciary.

Shawqi Jaber Rafaan

imam and preacher of the mosque in the village of Himyar Atma, Dhamar Governorate

On May 1, 2020, an armed group affiliated with the Houthi group, on board of three police vehicles, surrounded the village mosque. After the Friday prayer, they asked the mosque's preacher to surrender, but he refused. They shot him from one of the mosque's windows with several bullets. Then they carried him after his injury and killed him on the road before they reached the refrigerator of Dhamar General Hospital. They refused to hand his body over to his family for burial. The victim is married and father of five children. On the same day, the Houthi Ministry of Interior in Sana'a issued a statement blessing the security operation carried out by its members to kill what they called the emir of al-Qaeda in Otmah and Wesabin. By verifying the reasons that called the Houthi group to kill the



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The police opened an investigation after the incident and conducted several investigations, but no suspects in the assassination were referred to the judiciary



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The crime of the dead man comes on the basis of the victim's embrace of an idea that the Houthi group does not believe in

victim, we concluded that they accused him of engaging in awareness-raising activities against the ideology of the Houthi group in the district whose residents do not believe in the Houthis' ideology and consider it strange to their society.

Omar Mohammed Batawil

in Aden Governorate

The young man, who did not complete his seventeen years of age when he was assassinated, was one of the activists in the activities that provide voluntary services to the community in Aden. He has publications on his Facebook page criticizing religious traffickers, including "They accuse me of being an atheist... Oh those.... I see God in the flowers... while you see Him in the graves... and this is the difference between you and me). On the evening of Sunday, April 25, 2016, he left his house in Sheikh Othman neighborhood to buy some things. When he was late, his family called him and the response was terrifying to his family that there is a body lying in the 90th road. Omar's friends spoke to researchers of the American Center for Justice that the reason for Omar's killing was his accusation of atheism and that he had received death threats from extremists because of his publications criticizing religion and calling for freedom. The security services arrested one of his friends, who belongs to a militant Islamic group, and was referred to the judiciary on charges of murdering the victim, and the case is still pending before Sheikh Othman Court in Aden.⁽¹¹⁾



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They accuse me of being an atheist... Oh those.... I see God in flowers... and you see him in graves... and this is the difference between you and me

(11) The Public Prosecution accused Ihab Al Hammami of killing the victim Omar Batawil, based on a final sms on his phone. He was summoned to the scene of the incident, and then found dead hours after the sms. While the victim's friends add that Al Hammami, who belongs to the Salafist Forsan al-Din group, justified Omar's killing and rejoiced in it as a personal achievement. While the accused's family denies his connection to the murder of the victim and claims that they are related to a brotherly relationship and indicates that Ihab was the last to contact him.

Amjad Abdul Rahman Mohammed, 23, in Aden

Amjad founded the Al-Nasiyah Cultural Club in the Sheikh Othman district, which is attracting dozens of young people to exchange and discuss bold ideas to get out of the cycles of conflicts that afflict Yemen. Over a short period of time, the cultural club organized a number of seminars on issues of coexistence and the culture of acceptance of the other and the rejection of extremism, violence and terrorism. Young Amjad, who has a secular socialist orientation, has published posts on Facebook, including what he wrote after the assassination of his friend Omar Batawil. “I swear by those red drops we will not give up our freedom... I swear we will continue to gnaw at the wall of extremism and terrorism until we and the homeland enjoys freedom”.

At midnight on Sunday, May 14, 2017, a gunman stormed the Internet cafe of the young Amjad, fired several shots at him, documented the killing on video, and left the crime scene quietly. The American Center for Justice made a phone call to a journalist who is close to the victim, who spoke to us saying, “Before his assassination, Amjad received death threats. The source of the threats was extremist and terrorist groups who on one occasion, arrested and tortured him inside one of the camps affiliated with the so-called Security Belt in Aden (Camp of June 20 in Crater), led by Imam al-Nubi. These crimes were ended with the crime of his assassination in mid-May 2017 in Sheikh Othman city on charges of atheism and against the background of his peaceful activity calling for the rejection and opposition to violence, extremism and terrorism and spreading the values of tolerance, dialogue and acceptance of the other.” The journalist also added that the assassination of Amjad Abdul Rahman is a well-



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I swear, we will continue to gnaw
at the wall of extremism and
terrorism until we enjoy freedom
and the homeland

known, organized and complex crime because it was not limited to the killers shooting in cold blood on his body, but the crime was documented by the perpetrators. It was also preceded by threats to kill him. After committing the crime, these terrorist groups prevented his body from reaching his family home, depriving his parents and brothers of giving him last farewell looks, and preventing prayers for him in mosques and his funeral in the cemetery of the city of Crater in which he was born and raised was denied, considering him an infidel and an atheist. Three of his journalist companions were arrested in front of his house while they were coming to perform their condolences, and they were taken to Camp 20 prison and were subjected to torture.⁽¹²⁾

All of these actions are crimes no less serious than the assassination of Amjad. By following up on the incident file, the researchers of the American Center for Justice found that despite the passage of five years from the killing of the victim and the knowledge of the party that carried out the assassination, the Transitional Council in control of Aden has not launched any serious investigation into the crime. The judicial authorities are responsible for leniency and not arresting the perpetrators.



(12) The arrested journalists are (Majid Al-Shuaibi, Hossam Radman, Hani Al-Junaid).



B: ARREST AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE OF IMAMS AND PREACHERS OF MOSQUES

Hundreds of mosque preachers were subjected to arrest, enforced disappearance and torture in several governorates, including Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Al Mahwit, Amanat Al Asimah, Ibb, Dhamar and Al Baydha. It is worrying that the violations that affected this group were based on sectarian and revenge based on the victim's affiliation to a certain ideology. The monitors of the American Center for Justice were able to monitor (227) incidents of violations that varied between arrest and enforced disappearance. The Houthi group committed (171) incidents, the Transitional Council committed (39) incidents, armed groups in Taiz (12) cases, and the legitimate government in Marib (5) incidents. In our report, we mention some of those incidents as follows:

والجماعات المسلحة بتعز 12

جماعة الحوثي 171

والحكومة الشرعية بمارب 05

والمجلس الانتقالي 39

227

حالة انتهاك تنوعت بين
اعتقال واخفاء قسري

Mohammed Abdo Salam Al-Dhubhani in Aden

Al-Dhubhani is the imam and preacher of the Muadh Bin Jabal Mosque in Al-Sayla District, Sheikh Othman District, Aden Governorate, from the period (2000-2016), married, with seven children, holds a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies. On July 26, 2016, late at night, a security group known as the Counter-Terrorism Raid Cell raided the victim's house in the Al-Sayla area, arrested him and took him to a prison attached to the house of the Aden Security Director, Shallal Shaya, under the pretext that he had issued a fatwa to carry out the nursing home massacre. He was subjected to severe torture and forced to confess of a recorded video of what was attributed to him. On July 30, 2016, he was transferred to the coalition prison in Al-Buraiqeh district. In March 2018, the criminal prosecution specialized in state security issues in Aden decided to release and acquit him of the charges against him, but the security authorities did not release him until August 18, 2018, after he had spent more than two years in detention. He was subjected to various forms of torture and cruel treatment. As soon as he was released from prison, he left Aden outside the country.



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After he spent more than two years in detention centers where he was tortured, the criminal prosecution acquits him of the charge and decides to release him.

Yahya Hussein Al-Dailami – Marib

Al-Dailami is one of the Zaidi scholars in Yemen and the preacher of Al-Nahrain Mosque in Sana'a, and during his return from performing the Hajj pilgrimage on August 20, 2019 he was arrested by one of the security points in Marib Governorate and transferred to the Political Security Prison. The detention continued for a period of (13) months. He was released on September 22, 2020 in an exchange deal between the government and the Houthi group, which in return released the son and brother of the former Vice President Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar. The victim, upon his arrival to Sana'a, reported that he was subjected to harsh treatment during his detention in Marib Political Security prison, which is under the legitimate government.



Khaled Al-Rifai in Hafash District, Al-Mahwit

Khaled Al-Rifai, the preacher of the Great Mosque in Hafash district for several years, was arrested by the Houthi group in early 2018. The mosque was stormed on Friday by an armed group affiliated with the Houthis. The Houthis attacked him while he was delivering the Friday sermon and taken to an unknown destination. His family did not know anything about his whereabouts for a year and a half, which is the period of enforced disappearance. After his release, he told us that he was subjected to very cruel treatment, and his hiding place was Al-Masnaa prison,⁽¹⁾ which is one of the secret prisons of the Houthi group in Al-Mahwit Governorate. In Al-Mahwit Governorate only, the Center's field researcher during the war observed that the Houthi group had arrested and forcibly disappeared (117) imams and preachers of a mosque and sent to various prisons, including Al-Houd prison.⁽²⁾ The campaign of arrests and kidnappings began since January 2016 due to the preachers' rejection of the Houthi supervisors' dictates to carry out the group's religious activities, including attending mandatory cultural courses and adhering to the sermons issued by the Houthi Ministry of Endowments. The periods of detention and enforced disappearance lasted from five months to two years, and some of them are still under arrest until the date of this report.

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During the war period, the Houthi group in Al-Mahweet governorate arrested and forcibly disappeared 117 imams and preachers of a mosque, and they were taken to different prisons.

(1) Al-Masanna Fort is one of the archaeological forts in the Hafash district. It was used by the Houthi group as a secret detention center for their political opponents, including clerics and educators. There are still dozens of detainees and those who are hidden outside the authority of the law.

(2) Al Houd Prison, which is one of the secret prisons affiliated to the group in the Al-Rajm district.

C: EXPELLING MOSQUE PREACHERS FROM THEIR JOBS FOR POLITICAL REASONS

The northern governorates under the control of the Houthi group are considered religiously diverse for a number of Sunni, Sufi and Zaydi sects, with acceptance and tolerance between all of these sects. However, since the Houthi group's forcible takeover of the northern governorates in Yemen, it has systematically sought to partially exclude all preachers in mosques affiliated with other sects and replace them with their people, for the purpose of using religious discourse to serve its political and military goals and imposing its ideology by enticement and intimidation on society. The American Center for Justice (ACJ) researchers monitored and verified (301) incidents of violation, including (13) violation cases, for example only in several governorates,⁽³⁾ as follows:

No.	The name of the targeted place of worship	The place of violation - the governorate	Date of Violation	Type of Violation
1	Dhul-Nourin Mosque	Amanat Al Asemah- Tahrir	11/9/2014	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
2	Osman Mosque	Hodeidah Governorate	25/1/2015	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
3	Abu Bakr Al Siddiq Mosque	Amran Governorate	3/8/2014	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
4	Al Noor Mosque	Ibb Governorate	2/3/2015	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
5	Al-Taqwa Mosque	Al-Jawf Governorate	19/7/2019	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
6	Al-Furqan Mosque	Hajjah Governorate	6/4/2013	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
7	Al-Rahma Mosque	Al-Bayda Governorate	30/5/2016	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
8	Al-Faruq Mosque	Al Mahwit Governorate	10/12/2015	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
9	Al Khair Mosque	Sana'a Governorate	15/1/2015	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
10	Al Iman Mosque	Sana'a Governorate	26/10/2014	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
11	Al-Mashhad Mosque	Amanat Al Asemah - Sho'ub	17/1/2015	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
12	Imam Ali Mosque	Taiz Governorate	24/10/2016	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher
13	Al-Huda Mosque	Saada Governorate	20/2/2009	Storming the mosque by force and dismissing the preacher

(3) ACJ researchers assert that the Ansar Allah (Al-Houthi group) has replaced the preachers and imams of mosques in the 12 governorates under their control with 75% of the mosques that belonged to other groups and sects.

ADEN GOVERNORATE

Aden is subject to the forces of the Transitional Council supported by the Emirates, who appointed Mohammed Al-Wali, who is close to Hani bin Brik, the director of the Endowments and Guidance Office. Mr. Al Wali replaced some preachers and imams of mosques, some of whom belonged to the Islah Party and others belonged to the Sufi movement or the Salafist group who received their education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the Salafi group affiliated to Hani bin Brik who is known for his total loyalty to the Emirates.⁽⁴⁾ (ACJ) monitored, through its researchers in the governorate, a number of (31) violation in this regard in Aden only, (6) of which we present as examples as shown in the following table:

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Director of the Office of Endowments and Guidance (and close to Hani Bin Brik), where he changed a number of preachers and imams of mosques, some of whom belong to the Islah party, while others belong to the Sufi movement or the Salafist group

No.	mosque name	District	The former preacher	affiliation	The appointed preacher	affiliation
1	Bukhari	Sheikh – Al Memdara	Mohamed Hussein	Islah	Abdul Rauf Abdullah	Salafi affiliated to the UAE
2	Al Nassr	Mansoura	Ali Al Zaidi	Salafi	Yasser Zarara	Salafi affiliated to the UAE
3	Al Jabarti	Attawahi	Nidhal Mokbel	Sufi	Emad Ali Qassem	Salafi affiliated to the UAE
4	Al Rahmah	Al-Qaluaa	Hamed Bahmesh	Sufi	Ahmed Hassan Saleh	Salafi affiliated to the UAE
5	Salman Al-Farisy	Craiter	Osman Abd Rabbo	Islah	Khalid bin Salim	Salafi affiliated to the UAE
6	Salahaddin	Al Memdara	Abdul Latif Zain	Salafi	Ali Shehabi	Salafi affiliated to the UAE

(4) Hani Bin Brik was a Minister of State in 2016 and was able to consolidate his influence in Aden. He was supported by the Emirates, which relied on him in forming the so-called Security Belt Forces, which are not subject to the legitimate government and receive support from the Emirates. After the dismissal of Bin Brik by President Hadi, he declared his rebellion against the government and declared his allegiance to the UAE.

SECTION TWO: VIOLATIONS TO PLACES OF WORSHIP

A: BOMBING MOSQUES

The Houthi group presented a new model in managing the conflict with its opponents, which is to overthrow and control areas and then obliterate any features of the opponent in them. However, bombing mosques and leveling them on the ground is strange and alien to Yemeni society, which believes in coexistence with all religions and sects. This sparked widespread controversy among public opinion in all its sects and orientations. The monitors of the American Center for Justice, during the reporting period, were able to monitor and verify (27) mosques and (15) schools for teaching the Noble Qur'an and religious sciences that were completely blown up by the Houthi group in several Yemeni governorates, including the following cases:



1- Dar Al-Hadith Mosque in Kitaf District, Saada Governorate

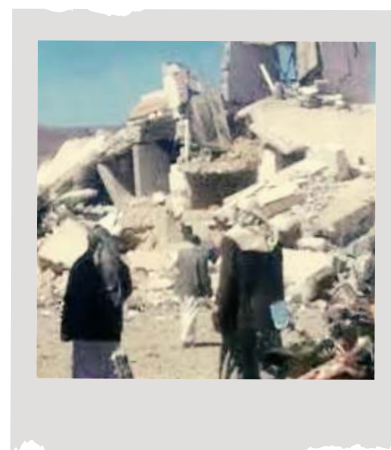
Kitaf district, located in the east of Saada governorate, which is 35 km away from the governorate center and close to the Saudi border, was taken over by the Houthi group on December 28, 2013 and the next day they detonated the mosque with high explosive devices after looting all its property.⁽¹⁾

2- Muadh bin Jabal Mosque - Sana'a Governorate

It is located in Arhab District, which lies to the north of the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, and is 30 km away. The Houthi group seized control of it on December 12, 2014 after two days of confrontations with the tribesmen. On the following day, the group blew up the Muadh Bin Jabal Center, which consisted of (a school for memorizing the Qur'an, a building for sheltering and sponsoring orphans and the poor, and the Great Mosque, which is one of the largest mosques in the district). The Center's monitors carried out a field visit to the district and documented the incident.⁽²⁾

3- Mansoura Mosque in Dhamar Governorate

After the Houthi group took control of the village of Haqar in Jahran District, north of Dhamar Governorate, they removed the preacher of the Great Mosque and appointed a replacement for him from the people affiliated with the group, and forced the people to chant the slogan of the cry after the prayers.⁽³⁾ Because of the strict religious discourse characterized by violence and hatred, the people of the village went to pray in the old mosque known as (Al-Mansoura Mosque). Its area is (12 * 12) meters. This angered the Houthi group, and they named it (Al-Darar Mosque). On the evening of August 20, 2018, they sent one of their supervisors⁽⁴⁾ to the village with a number of his



Al-Mansoura Mosque, Dhamar, after it was burned by members of the Houthi group

(1) During the bombing, the Houthis brought cameramen belonging to Al-Alam TV and Al-Manar TV to document the bombing.

(2) The monitors of the American Center carried out a field visit the day after the explosion within a media and journalist team and examined the effects of the bombing of the mosque, while members of the Houthi group were still moving the remaining doors and windows of the mosque for disposal.

(3) The slogan of the cry is the political slogan of the Houthi group and is written in its flags (God is great, death to America, death to Israel, curse on the Jews, victory for Islam). The group obliges its supporters to chant the slogan in mosques and imposes it by force on school students every day after the morning broadcast, which is not accepted by many members of society.

(4) Abdul Majeed Mohammed Ahmad Al-Majdoub was the one who stormed Al-Mansoura Mosque with his companions, and they set fires inside, which caused the burning of (250) copies of the Qur'an and the complete destruction of the mosque's contents of audio and furniture.

companions, who proceeded to storm the mosque and set it on fire, which caused the complete destruction of all its furniture, audio and Quran contents.

4- Amran governorate is an example of the violation of the bombing of places of worship

After the Houthi group tightened its control over the entire city of Saada, it turned towards Amran Governorate, the stronghold of the Hashid tribe. Clashes erupted between the Houthis and the Hashid tribes, and large areas fell into the hands of the Houthi group, including the Hawth region, which was the center of the Hashid tribe. Despite the religious coexistence that the governorate witnessed between sects and religious groups of various orientations before the Houthis took control of the governorate, (13) mosques belonging to Sunni sects were blown up after the group took control of Amran at the beginning of 2014. The Houthis shows hostility with the Sunni sect and describes its followers as infidels for embracing a different sect.

A table of the names of mosques that were blew up by the Houthi group in Amran governorate only

No.	Mosque Name	Incident Place	No.	Mosque Name	Incident Place
1	Rahman mosque	Edhr	8	Wahas Mosque	Hawth
2	Al-Faruq Mosque	Danan	9	Al-Ahmer Mosque	Al Khamri
3	Dar Al-Hadith Mosque	Khaiwan	10	Al-Rahma Mosque	Khamer
4	Hassan Mosque	Bani Suraim	11	Al Ghoulah Mosque	Naqil Al Ghoulah
5	Al-Aqili Mosque	Bani Aqil	12	Bilal Mosque	Raydah
6	Al-Rahma Mosque	Hawth	13	Al Dhulai Mosque	Hamadan
7	Al-Siddiq Mosque	Al Khamri			



B: DEMOLITION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL MOSQUES

Archaeological mosques are among the cultural objects that constitute a historical store for the heritage of the Yemeni people, and attacking or damaging them is considered a crime in accordance with national legislation. It is also considered a grave violation of international conventions, including the Hague Convention ratified by the Republic of Yemen. Moreover, it is a violation of the provisions of Article (16) of the Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention on Non-International Armed Conflict, **which prohibits the commission of any hostile acts against historical monuments and artworks that constitute cultural and spiritual heritage for the people. The Center's team was able to monitor and verify (17) incidents in several governorates. These violations were committed on the basis of sectarian discrimination because they belong to a certain sect or group. The Houthi group was responsible for (6) incidents, the joint forces on the West Coast (5) incidents, and the Abu al-Abbas group in Taiz (3) incidents, and Al-Qaeda organization in Hadramout (Ansar al-Sharia) (3) incidents. We list some of those incidents with a clarification of the party responsible for the violation, as follows:**

1- The Dome and Mausoleum of Sheikh Yaqoub Bawazir in Hadramawt

Sheikh Yaqoub Bawazir, in relation to Yaqoub bin Yusuf bin Ali, who was the minister of one of the Caliphs of Banu Al-Abbas. He came from Baghdad to Hadhramaut with his sons, stayed in Mukalla, and lived there for a period. He died in the year (553) AH (1158) AD, and was buried in its white dune, which is known today as the soil of Jacob. Then the famous dome was built around it, which is one of the city's famous landmarks. Under al-Qaeda's control of Hadhramaut Governorate at the end of 2015, it demolished and blew up a number of Sufi domes, shrines and shrines that had been built for several centuries, including the Dome of Yaqoub. The Dome of Yaqoub was detonated on October 3, 2015 using a high-explosive dynamite that caused the dome to be completely demolished and caused various damages to neighboring houses. Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the bombing, threatening to demolish all the shrines and domes in the governorate. On April 19, 2016, gunmen affiliated with Al-Qaeda blew up the dome of Imam Al-Habib Ali bin Hassan Al-Attas in the village of Al-Mashhad in Wadi Hadramout using explosive devices, causing moderate damage to the dome. (ACJ) researchers in the governorate, who carried out a field



visit to the place of the two incidents, examined the damages and listened to the testimony of the residents, and concluded that these violations were committed on the basis of sectarian discrimination, as they belong to the Sufi group.⁽¹⁾

2- The Dome of the Mahdi in Taiz Governorate

The dome of the Mahdi is one of the most prominent Islamic mystical monuments in the city, and its history dates back to the Rasulid state during the sixth to eighth centuries AH (1106-1300) AD. The Dome is connected to the Abd al-Hadi al-Sudi Mosque, who died in the Mamluk era and was buried in the area where the mosque was built now.

On July 29, 2016, at nine o'clock on Friday evening, a group of masked gunmen blew up the entire dome building, causing the mosque's wall to crack completely.⁽²⁾ The Center's researchers in the governorate carried out a field visit to the location of the incident and conducted a field investigation and listened to the testimonies of witnesses. The researchers concluded that the people who blew up the Dome of the Mahdi were people belonging to the Abu Abbas Salafi group, who committed the violation on the basis of sectarian discrimination, since the Dome of the Mahdi belongs to the Sufi group.⁽³⁾

3- Al-Faza Mosque - Al-Hodeida Governorate

It is considered one of the oldest mosques in Yemen. It is located in the village of Al-Faza, which is affiliated to Al-Tahita District, Al-Hodeida Governorate. The construction of the Al-Faza Mosque is attributed to Sheikh Al-Faqih Ahmad Al-Faza. Its construction dates back to the time of the two states, the Sulayhid and Najahid, in the 5th and 6th centuries Hijri - 11th and 12th centuries. The mosque overlooks the beach of Al-Faza. The mosque consists of a rectangular building that contains an open courtyard on the southern side and a prayer hall on the northern side. There is also an area attached to the mosque designated

(1) The Sufi group, which spreads in several areas in central and southern Yemen, has been subjected to destruction and attacks in the governorates of Taiz, Lahj, Hodeidah and Hadramout by extremist terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, the Abu Al-Abbas group in Taiz, and the Giants Brigade on the western coast.

(2) The explosion killed Al-Hajj Ali Abu Asba, 80, due to being hit in the head by flying stones from the dome. The explosion also injured three civilians and damaged a number of nearby houses.

(3) In the same period, the tomb of al-Shabazi in Taiz governorate was attacked, and demolished by the Salafi Abu Al-Abbas group.



Dome of the Mahdi - Taiz



before detonation

after the bombing

for burial located on the southwestern side. On November 24, 2018, after the Houthi group withdrew from the area and the Giants forces took control of it,⁽⁴⁾ the mosque was still standing, and it was not harmed. After the Giants forces took control, they demolished the mosque using bulldozers and flattened it to the ground. They claimed that there was a shrine in the mosque, which is considered one of the heresies and taboos for the Salafi group, many of whose fighters are affiliated with the Giants Forces and the southern forces established and supported by the UAE financially and militarily in the southern governorates and the western coast.

4- Al Mahmoul Mosque, Hodeida Governorate

It is located in the city of Moore in Al-Zahra district in Hodeida Governorate. The mosque is 10m long and 7m wide. It was built entirely of ancient stones with antique inscriptions. In January 2021, the mosque was completely demolished by the Houthi group. The minaret was demolished and all the stones with archaeological inscriptions from the early Hijri eras (767) were looted.

5- Al-Nahrain Mosque in Amanat Al-Asimah

Al-Nahrain Mosque is located in Al-Sabbah neighborhood in the old city of Sana'a. It is a historical and archaeological city that was included by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the World Heritage List in 1986. Among the old city of Sana'a's historical landmarks is the Al-Nahrain Mosque, which was built in the first Hijri century (718 AD) by one of the companions who lived in Al-Nahrain neighborhood and was buried next to the mosque. The mosque was expanded in the eleventh century AH (1591 AD). The mosque is among the important monuments that need to be preserved. On February 9, 2021, the Endowments Office in the Capital Secretariat, which is

(4) *The Salafi-oriented Giants Forces consist of a number of brigades that were recruited from the people of the southern governorates by the UAE, which took over their training, arming, and payment of their salaries, and they controlled the western coast along with the republic's guards and the Tuhami resistance.*



Al-Nahrain Mosque

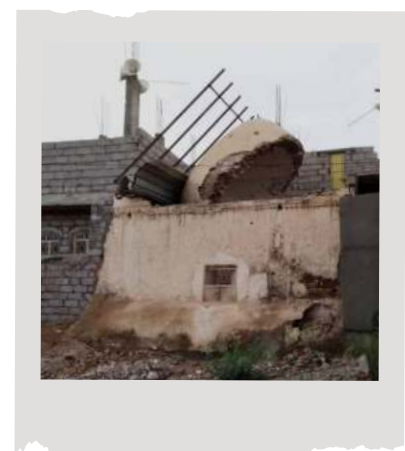
under the authority of the Houthis, demolished the mosque under the pretext of building a modern mosque in its place. Observers believe that the purpose is to build a commercial center on parts of the ruins of the mosque. The team of the American Center for Justice carried out a field trip to the site of the mosque and witnessed the ruins and destruction that affected the mosque, where the ceilings were initially demolished, followed by the demolition of the walls and leveling them with the ground. In all cases, whatever the purpose of demolishing the ancient mosque which is associated with the culture and history of Yemenis, this is a crime in accordance with international law which requires protection for cultural objects of peoples, and in accordance with the national law represented by Antiquities Law No. (28) Of 1997 which criminalized the attack on historical monuments.⁽⁵⁾ The demolition of the mosque also caused damage to the owners of the houses adjacent to the mosque, the most important of which was preventing them from practicing the ritual prayer and receiving religious sciences.



A memorandum issued by the Awqaf in Sana'a condemning the demolition of Al-Nahrain Mosque

6- The Dome of Al-Balkhali tomb, Hays District in Al-Hodeidah

The dome of the tomb of Al-Abed Ahmed bin Al-Khall, known as Al-Balkhali, is one of the oldest mosques in the historic city of Hays. It is not a shrine and no rituals are held for it except that it is the tomb of Ibn al-Khall who died more than 400 years ago. It was destroyed on May 12, 2021 by the 7th Brigade⁽⁶⁾ Giants, who demolished it using large bulldozers and leveled it to the ground, claiming that domes are among the heresies forbidden in religion. The mosque is built on an area of (15 * 20) meters and has three ancient domes. Its construction dates back to the era of the Rasulid state in the seventh century AH (1229-1454 AD).



(5) Yemeni Law No. (28) on Antiquities criminalizes assaulting mosques and archaeological objects in Articles (3,10,11,14,17,39,40,41).

(6) The Seventh Giants Brigade of the Salafis is from the southern provinces and is headed by Colonel Ali Al-Kinyan

C: BOMBING AND TARGETING OF PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship have had a large share of the ravages of the war that the country has been witnessing for seven years. Following the Houthi group's control of power by armed force and its expansion in the Yemeni governorates, and the subsequent intervention of the Arab coalition with what it called the "Decisive Storm" led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the places of worship have suffered a share of devastation and destruction due to direct and indirect bombing by the Arab coalition or by the Houthis, and before that, by extremist groups that were a product of the war that has been going on in the country for seven years. During the reporting period, the American Center for Justice's team monitored and verified the total destruction of (30) mosques and partial destruction of (123) mosques in several governorates. The Houthis were responsible for (107) violations, (70) %, and the responsibility of the Arab coalition was for (46) violations as a result of air raids, (30%). We provide, for example, the following:



1- Al-Saleh Mosque in Amanat Al-Asimah⁽¹⁾

Al-Saleh Mosque is the largest mosque in Yemen and is located in the center of the capital city. Its construction continued for several years during the era of former President Ali Saleh and is one of the most prominent urban landmarks in Yemen. It is considered a place and a destination for many visitors from inside and outside Yemen because it includes a university and several affiliated annexes. Observers of the American Center for Justice visited the mosque and were briefed on the extent of the damage caused to it by the air raids of the coalition aircraft during the years of war. The most impactful were the raids that targeted the Sabeen Square platform, which is located near the mosque, in mid-2017. The mosque was partially damaged, its windows were broken, some of its walls and gate were cracked. Moreover, we saw damage to its roofs from the inside. These damages are still visible today. Dozens of houses of worship in Amanat Al-Asimah and Saada Governorate suffered moderate to light damage as a result of their location near the military camps and sites surrounding the capital from all directions.⁽²⁾ (Attach a picture)

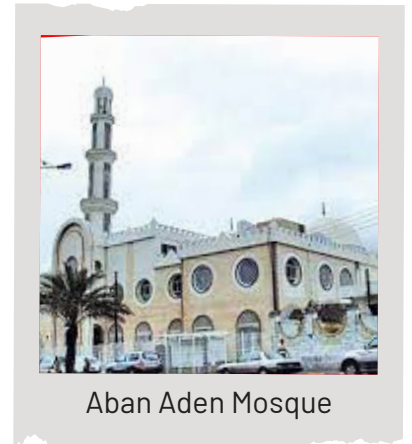


(1) After the killing of former President Ali Saleh at the hands of the Houthi group in early December 2017, they changed the name of the mosque to the People's Mosque

(2) Among those mosques are the Imam Ali Mosque in Haziz south of Sana'a, the Al-Firdaws Mosque, the Al-Ansar Mosque, the Al-Zahra Mosque in Asr and the Hamra Alab Mosque in Sanhan.

2- Historical Aban Mosque in Aden Governorate

It is one of the oldest mosques in the Arabian Peninsula and the city of Aden in particular. Its construction dates back to the year 105 AH (723 AD). It was named by this name in relation to Al-Hakam bin Aban bin Othman bin Affan, who was the guardian of Aden and built the mosque and named it after his father. It is considered one of the old Islamic monuments with simple construction and was restored several times and then completely rebuilt in 1998 and all its old features were obliterated. With the armed incursion of the Houthi group into the governorate of Aden in early April 2015, the mosque was bombed with heavy weapons, causing moderate damage to the minarets, gate and windows of the mosque. In addition, a number of other mosques in Aden, during the Houthi control of parts of the city, either were stormed or bombed (Al-Aidarous and Al-Rehab Mosque, Al-Huda and Al-Taqwa Mosque in Al-Taweelah neighborhood in Crater, Al-Iraqi Mosque, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar Mosque, Al-Shaneeqti Mosque and other mosques.⁽³⁾



3- Al-Hadi Mosque in Saada Governorate

It is one of the historic mosques of Saada, located in the heart of the historic city of Saada, in the middle of the popular neighborhoods. The mosque was built in the year 290 AH (9th century AD). The length of the mosque is (80) meters, width (60) meters, and the length of its minaret is (52) meters. The mosque houses the shrine of the founder of the state of the imams (Zaydi) Yahya bin Al-Hussein Ibn Al-Qasim Al-Rasi. The mosque was bombed by a coalition airstrike on May 9, 2015, causing moderate damage to its eastern gate and windows.



(3) The Department of Endowments and Guidance in Aden Governorate clarified that the size of the losses suffered by mosques in the city during the period of the armed invasion of the Houthis for the period between March 25 and July 17 reached (83) mosques in various districts of the governorate. The attacks were divided between bombing and violent incursions.

4- Al-Qasimi Mosque in Al-Hodeidah Governorate

On February 13, 2021, the Houthi group targeted the Al-Qasimi Mosque, located in the Mandhar neighborhood of Al-Hawk district, with two Katyusha rocket, which led to its complete destruction. The mosque is considered one of the largest and oldest mosques in Al-Hawk district. The bombing also caused extensive damage to a number of nearby houses. The team of the American Center for Justice (ACJ) moved to the location of the incident and saw the extensive destruction left by the bombing of the mosque.

5- Dar Al-Hadith Mosque and Center in Ma'rib Governorate

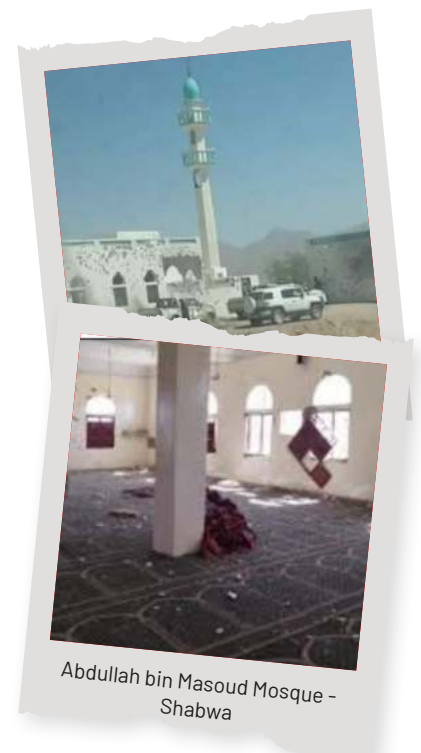
On October 31, 2021, the Ansar Allah (Al-Houthi group) bombed a center belonging to the Sunni Salafist group in the village of Al-Amoud, Al-Jawbah District, south of Marib, with two missiles. The attack resulted in the death of (8) people and the injury of (20) others, including women and children. Most of the victims are forcibly displaced people who were displaced by the Houthi group from Dammaj village in January 2014.⁽⁴⁾

6- Abdullah bin Masoud Mosque in Shabwa Governorate

On January 28, 2022, the Houthi group bombed the Abdullah bin Masoud Mosque, located in the village of Al-Saffhah, Usaylan District, Shabwa Governorate, using a ballistic missile, which caused great damage to the mosque building. The bombing took place during the Houthi group's attack on the district early this year. Although the mosque is far from the battlefields and was not used for a military purpose by the Giants forces, it was directly targeted as observed by the Center's field researcher in the governorate.



Al-Qasimi Mosque - Al-Hodeidah



Abdullah bin Masoud Mosque - Shabwa

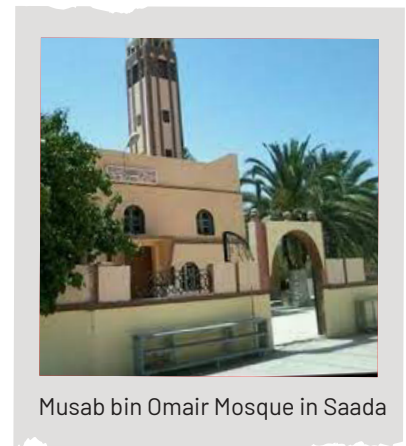
(4) On Thursday evening, on 10 June 2021, the Houthi forces bombed the city of Marib and targeted the facility building and the mosque attached to it, causing deaths and injuries. On January 18, 2020, while hundreds of soldiers of the legitimate government were performing prayers inside the mosque, the Houthis targeted the mosque with a number of missiles, which left (80) dead and dozens wounded, and the mosque was completely destroyed.

D: CONVERTING PLACES OF WORSHIP INTO MILITARY BARRACKS AND PRISONS

Despite the legal protection for places of worship during internal and international armed conflicts, this protection was wasted and absent from places of worship during the war in Yemen. Many of worship places have been turned into military barracks and prisons, especially by the Ansar Allah group (Houthis) in northern Yemen. ACJ field team monitored and verified that the Houthi group had converted (303) mosques into military barracks to house fighters, while some of them were turned into military prisons and weapons depots. This was also accompanied by another violation represented by the armed incursion into places of worship. The Center's team was able to monitor a number of (211) incident of armed storming of mosques and religious centers in several northern governorates, including the following, as an example:

Musab bin Omair Mosque in Saada Governorate*

It is located on the main road linking Saada and Dahyan district, and it is 10 km away from the city of Saada. It is considered one of the mosques of the Sunni sect. Next to it, there is a house for memorizing the Holy Quran for approximately (200) students and (10) teachers. Since the middle of 2013, the Houthi group began storming the mosque by force of arms and chanting the slogan of the cry, and thus it made Friday a frightening day for students, teachers and worshipers, given that everyone belongs to the Sunni sect, which the Houthi group is targeting on this basis. On July 22, 2014, several armored vehicles and police armed vehicles belonging to the Houthi group attacked the mosque. The storming armed groups severely beat the mosque's preacher and a number of students using rifles, wires and sticks. They took (4) teachers to secret prisons, and they were only released after (15) days on the condition that the mosque is handed over to them and the students are expelled. Moreover, the groups confiscated all the property belonging to the house, teachers and students, and the mosque and its annexes were converted into a training center for the group to supply its fronts with fighters.⁽¹⁾



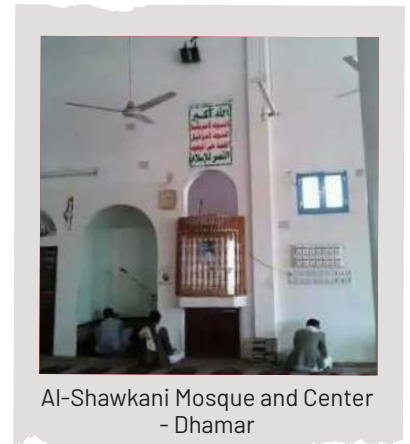
(1) The Center's researcher in Saada governorate conducted interviews with the victims and listened to the testimony of witnesses, and the Center withheld their names for fear of reprisals by the Houthi group.

2- Al-Shawkani Mosque and Center in Dhamar Governorate

On October 23, 2019, armed groups affiliated with the Houthi group besieged the Imam al-Shawkani Mosque and Center, located on the Western Al Dairy Road in Dhamar governorate, which is dedicated to teaching the Holy Quran and religious sciences. They arrested the imam, preacher and director of the center, Sheikh Abdul-Malik Qaid al-Raisi, who has lived with his family in the same center for several years and has been the imam of the mosque and teaching the Holy Quran to (50) students. They took him on board one of the police vehicle to the Endowments office and forced him to write a written pledge to hand over the mosque and center, to expel students from it, and to vacate his residence with his family within four days. Following the implementation of their conditions, the Houthi group seized the mosque and changed its name to Al-Imam Al-Hadi Mosque, appointed a preacher loyal to them, and turned the center's annexes into a special headquarters for its fighters. These violations of seizing the mosque, changing its name, and banning education, based on an ideological and sectarian basis that the Houthi group pursues against all those it sees as its opponents.

Al-Farouq Mosque in Amanat Al-Asimah

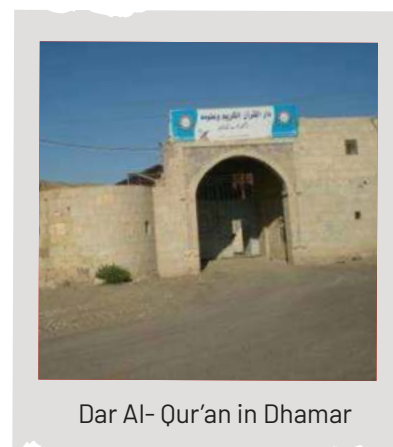
The mosque is located in the Sa'wan district, Sho'ub district, to the east of the capital secretariat. The mosque was built at the expense of a benefactor at the end of 2014. It consists of a large first floor designated as a prayer room for men and an annex on the second floor designated as a prayer room for women. In the middle of 2015, the mosque was stormed by an armed group affiliated with the Houthis. At first, they changed the name of the mosque to Al-Khair Mosque instead of Al-Farouq, and they stormed the second floor designated as a prayer room for women and turned it into a military center for the group and a headquarters for assembling fighters and sending them to the battlefronts. This caused women to be deprived of their right to perform religious rites on an equal footing with men. It is worth



mentioning here that hundreds of mosques in the governorates of Sana'a, Dhamar, Amran, Al-Mahwit and Al-Bayda, which were monitored by the Center's monitors, have been controlled by the Houthis group and turned into headquarters and gathering centers for fighters to supply the fighting fronts. Mosques has been the focus for the Houthis because they are safe places for the Houthis from targeting their gatherings by the Arab coalition aircraft.⁽²⁾

The House of the Noble Qur'an in Dhamar Governorate

On November 16, 2016, armed groups consisting of six police vehicles led by the supervisor of the Houthis in the Al-Hada district Abdul Karim Saleh Hussein Al-Bakhiti stormed the building of the Holy Qur'an House in the village of Zarajah, the center of the Al-Hada district. The gunmen surrounded and besieged the house from all directions and then stormed it and expelled all the male and female students present in the house while they were receiving education. The house was established in 1993 and was dedicated to teaching the Holy Quran and religious sciences to (220) male and (115) female students, and (11) educational staff teachers and (5) employees. After the storming, the Houthis looted all the property of the house, including furniture, offices and supplies.⁽³⁾



The Houthi group transformed part of the house into a detention center for the residents of the district, and the other part was to receive recruits to support its fighting fronts, and organizing its own events and courses. The intrusion, confiscation of property, and suspension of education come based on sectarian and ideological discrimination practiced by the Houthi group in a systematic way in confronting all sects that contradict it and imposing its ideology by force on all residents in its areas of control.

(2) Transforming places of worship into special headquarters for activities by the Houthi group is a flagrant violation of the sanctity of places of worship stipulated in national and international laws.

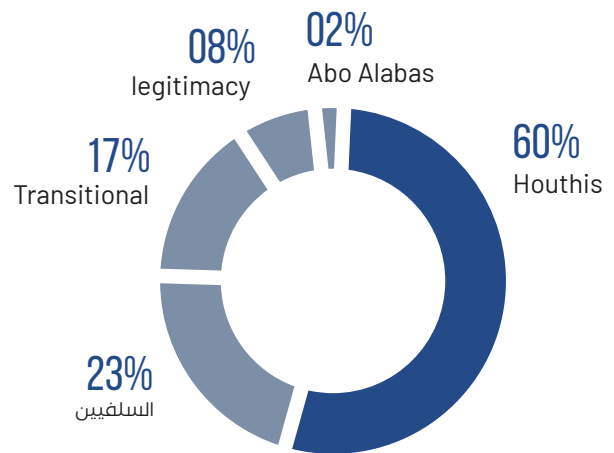
(3) After the Houthi group took control of the house, it looted all its contents, including (7) different cars, furniture and property estimated at hundreds of millions.

E: USING RELIGIOUS PLATFORMS TO INCITE VIOLENCE AND HATRED

The parties to the conflict in the country have subjugated places of worship during the war period for political purposes to call for fighting and spreading the spirit of hatred in the face of their opponents. This act is in deviation from the purpose for which mosques were established and in the first place allocating them to worship that belongs to the Creator alone, as well as to the benefits of society, such as reunification, warding off strife, and reforming disputes between its members. However, all parties have exploited the daily and weekly attendance of people to mosques, especially in Friday prayers which was badly exploited, especially by the Ansar Allah Al-Houthi group, for speeches to incite violence, hatred and atonement for the other, push people to fight, collect money to support the fronts, and paste the group’s political slogans inside mosques and on their pulpits. Rather, some leaders have even escalated the religious discourse to claim that the orders that come to them to fight their opponents are divine orders.⁽¹⁾ The American Center for Justice monitored and verified a number of (1,793) incidents in which the responsibility of the parties was as follows:

1,942

The number of violations that the American Center for Justice monitored and verified and for which the parties were responsible are as follows



SALAFIST GROUPS ON THE WEST COAST

399

“

Al-Taqwa Mosque - Omar Al-Siddiq Mosque

ANSAR ALLAH GROUP (HOOTHIS)

1,075

“

Bilal Bin Rabah Mosque - Ansar Mosque
Al-Firdaws Mosque

ABU AL-ABBAS GROUP IN TAIZ

35

“

Al-Furqan Mosque
Caliph Othman Mosque

LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT

138

“

Al-Saeed Mosque - The Companions
Mosque - Al-Abbas Mosque

SOUTHERN TRANSITIONAL COUNCIL

295

“

Al-Bayt Mosque - Aisha
Mosque - Al-Nour Mosque

(1) This is what the Houthi leader, Mohammed Al-Bakhiti who was appointed the governor of Dhamar, stated, saying that he pushed the people to fight against the legitimate forces on the Marib front. Those orders issued by his supreme leadership are divine orders that come to them from God, and that saying is very dangerous as it has dire consequences for generations, especially children who instill in their minds wrong ideas and makes them easy fuel for the wars of extremist groups.

F: CHANGING THE NAMES OF MOSQUES FOR IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND SECTARIAN REASONS

In order for the Ansar Allah (Houthis) to implement their future plans to spread their beliefs in society at the expense of other sects and groups, the group changed many names of the mosques, either for political, ideological or sectarian reasons.⁽¹⁾ ACJ's researchers monitored and verified (36) incidents of violation, of which we mentioned, for example, (6) incidents as in the following table:

No.	The common name of the mosque	The modern name of the mosque	Incident location	Reasons for change	date of violation
1	As-Salih Mosque	People's Mosque	Amanat Al Asemah- Al-Sabeen District	political reasons	2018
2	Dhul-Nourin Mosque	Al-Ansi Mosque	Amanat Al Asimah - Al Tahrir District	Doctrinal and ideological reasons	2017
3	Mosque of Omar ibn al-Khattab	Al-Khair Mosque	Amanat Al Asemah-Sho'ub District	Doctrinal and ideological reasons	2015
4	Abu Bakr Al Siddiq Mosque	Al Tadamon Mosque	Amran Governorate	Doctrinal reasons	2015
5	Abu Huraira Mosque	The Great Mosque of Al-Fath	Dhamar Governorate	Doctrinal and ideological reasons	2016
6	Amr ibn al-Aas mosque	Al-Shaheed Mosque	Sana'a Governorate	Doctrinal and ideological reasons	2017

The Houthi group also confiscated the endowment funds allocated to places of worship and transferred them to the private commercial interests of influential people and leaders in the group. During the reporting period, ACJ's researchers were able to monitor (19) incidents of confiscation of endowment funds belonging to mosques in the governorates under their control, for example (Al-Firdaws Mosque and Al-Jamaa Mosque) in the capital Sana'a.

(1) This violation is one of the types of violations that have been known only since the Ansar Allah Al-Houthi group seized power by force of arms at the end of 2014, and is solely committed by the group in Yemen.

G: PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTIONS ON PERFORMING RELIGIOUS RITES

The Yemeni constitution guarantees the right of individuals to practice religious rites without any prohibition or restriction. However, the Houthi group, in the areas under its control, restricts the freedom to practice religious rites of other sects. It even, in most cases, prevents the performance of these rites, including Tarawih and Qiyaam prayers, which takes place in the nights of the month of Ramadan every year. The prayers are performed by 70% of the people of Yemen. The group also prevent holding religious and scientific lessons in mosques in the northern governorates. The American Center for Justice (ACJ) team monitored and verified that the Ansar Allah group committed a number of (411) violations that varied between preventing and restricting the performance of religious rites in several governorates, including Sana'a, Al-Mahwit, Dhamar, Amana, Hajjah, Al-Bayda. We show, for example, the following cases:

1- Al-Fath Mosque in Dhamar Governorate

On December 7, 2019, an armed group of Houthis stormed the Al-Fateh Mosque, which is designated for women's prayer. In the mosque, a Quran teaching session for girls used to be held for (120) female students in the morning and (80) female students in the evening. After storming the mosque, the female students and teachers were expelled and the mosque was closed completely. A note "Closed by the Endowment Ministry" was written on the mosque's door. The director of the center, Ms. A.M.H., had received threats from Houthi supervisors to close the center, dismiss female students, and halt learning sessions, but she refused these threats and continued the teaching process at Al-Fateh Center. Three months before the center was closed, she was exposed to a traffic accident that broke her spine. After the accident, she suffered a stroke that compounded her pain, and for several months, she remained bedridden, unable to speak or move.⁽¹⁾

2- Al-Sunna Mosque - Amanat Al-Asimah

The mosque is one of the centers of the Salafi community. It is located in the city of Sa'wan, Sha'wb district, in Amanat Al Asimah. On August 21, 2020, the mosque was stormed by armed groups affiliated with the Houthis before Friday prayers for chanting the slogan of the group's cry and provoking the feelings of hundreds of worshipers who left their mosques after the Houthi religious discourse took control of them and sought refuge in this mosque. The incidents of storming were also repeated on most Fridays, as the group deliberately held vigils in front of the mosque after the end of Friday prayers, during which political speeches were delivered criticizing the neutral position of the Salafist group on the events of the , war and its lack of support for the Houthi group.

(1) The Director of the Endowment Office in Dhamar Governorate, Abdullah Al-Jarmoozi, is the one who ordered the closure of the Al-Fateh Center and the suspension of education in it until today.

On June 7, 2021, armed groups of the Houthis stormed the mosque, searched its annexes, and arrested (6) Salafi students and detained them at Al-Wahda Police Station for a week. They also closed the mosque on the day of the incident and put armed men in front of its gate to prevent entry, and besieged the preacher of the mosque, Sheikh Abdul Basit Al-Ridi, to arrest him. Then they opened the mosque late on the same day, with conditions including preventing holding of any religious lessons inside the mosque and releasing students from the mosque's dormitory. The incident coincided with incursions into other Salafi mosques and their seizure by the Houthi group in Sana'a, Dhamar, and Ibb governorates.⁽²⁾



The killing of the elderly Hizam bin Ali Al-Qushaibri

Hizam al-Qushaibri, 70, was the custodian of the mosque he built in Qaflat Adhar District, Amran Governorate. In last Ramadan, the group's supervisor in the district asked Al-Qushaibri to install a television screen in the mosque to broadcast the speeches of the group's leader, Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, every night, but he refused. The group responded quickly, as it arrested him along with four of his sons. Under societal pressure, he was released after (20) days of his arrest, and two days later, he was found dead in an old water well in the area. Eyewitnesses from the area told ACJ researchers in the governorate that the killing of the elderly Al-Qushaibri came on the background of preventing the Houthi group from turning the mosque into a Qat chewing council for the group's members and installing screens to broadcast the speeches of their leader.

(2) Despite the fact that there was an agreement between the Houthi group and the Salafi group not to expose the former to the latter and to grant it the right to conduct religious rites and scientific lessons in its mosques. However, that agreement was not adhered to by the Houthi group, as it stormed and confiscated dozens of mosques belonging to the Salafi group.

AL-MAHWIT GOVERNORATE AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE VIOLATION

Al-Mahwit Governorate has received a great deal of restrictions on religious freedoms. The Houthi group has prevented the performance of Tarawih prayers in the largest mosques in the city, most notably the historic Masiya Mosque, the Al Amn Mosque, and the Al-Noor Mosque. After the evening prayer, the group's mosque officials open the lectures of the group's leader, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, and force the worshipers to listen to them. Armed elements were placed at the entrances to those mosques at the gates to suppress the worshipers and prevent those who wanted to leave those mosques from leaving while opening televised lectures given by the leader of the group.⁽¹⁾

On April 20, 2021, corresponding to Ramadan 8, 1442 AH, the Houthi supervisor in Jabal Al Mahwit district, Abu Ayman Al-Shahdi, assaulted an elderly man in his sixties inside the mosque. The old man was praying on the Houthis because of their harassment inside the mosques in Ma'aynah area and preventing them from performing rituals worship during the holy month of Ramadan.⁽²⁾ On the sixth of Ramadan of the same year, and in the sub-district of Al-Malahna in the Hafash district, the Houthi supervisor, Mansour Al-Ezzi, attacked the 90-year-old imam of the mosque, Nasser Mohammed Zayed. The supervisor stormed the mosque while performing the Tarawih prayer, prevented the Tarawih prayer, and beat the elderly imam of the mosque until he passed out. After the attack, the victim was taken to Sanaa for treatment. His health deteriorated due to the attack until he died on May 5, 2021. The Houthi supervisor prevented the people from performing Tarawih prayers and turned the mosque into a place for religious evenings affiliated with the Houthi group during the month of Ramadan.⁽³⁾

(1) On 2 May 2021 Al-Azhar issued a statement condemning the Houthi group's ban on Yemenis from holding Tarawih prayers during the month of Ramadan, describing such acts as racist and hateful practices.

(2) On May 2, 2020, the Arab Parliament issued a statement condemning the Houthi group's ban on holding Tarawih prayers in mosques by force of arms.

(3) The American Center for Justice issued a statement on 3/5/2021 condemning the prevention of the Houthi group in the areas under its control from performing the Tarawih prayer, considering the right to perform religious rituals guaranteed by the constitution and the charters and treaties to which Yemen is party.

H: The Houthi Authorities Subject State Employees to Attend Compulsory Sectarian Courses

In the (12) governorates under its control, the Houthi group systematically forces government employees in the civil and military sectors to attend sectarian courses, which they call (cultural courses). Employees are divided into groups of (20) to (60) employees taken from their workplaces after switching off their mobiles, and driven off in a car with tinted windows to unknown places, often in basements inside or outside cities. The period of this course lasts from ten days to a month, and may reach a period of three months in the event that the evaluation of the employees in comprehending the doctrine and concepts of the group by those in charge of the course is poor. In the event that the employee refrained from attending the cultural course, his penalty was exclusion from the public office, as is the case for many civil and military employees.

The Houthi group also allocates every Wednesday in all government facilities for employees to listen to a mandatory lecture by the leader of the Houthi group; and whoever fails to attend will be punished.

On the topics and concepts of the compulsory courses, the researchers of the American Center for Justice met with the employee (A. A. M.), who works as the principal of a public school in Sana'a. He told us:

"Through the sectarian courses imposed by the Houthi group on the employees, the employees are forcibly taught the biography and handouts of the group's leader, Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi, which the group considers religious principles of holiness that must be followed. The group also aims to compulsorily inculcate its faith and culture through these courses. The courses are not without the group's glorification of the symbols of politics and religion in Yemen, Lebanon and Iran." He concluded his speech to us by saying, "We, as a school principal, are asked to inculcate and convey that sectarian and religious culture to students in schools through the daily school morning queue. Moreover, during the period of the course, which may reach a month or more, we are completely denied of the outside world. We do not even know where we are, and we cannot communicate with our people throughout the period of that course. The researchers of the American Center were able to monitor a number of (1,113) compulsory courses of sectarian and ideological nature in all governorates controlled by the Houthi group.

VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY THE HOUTHJI GROUP AGAINST RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD



The bombings of mosques and schools teaching the Qoran



prohibition and restriction

Establishing religious rites for other denominations



411

prohibition and restriction

Establishing religious rites for other denominations

303



Changing the names of mosques for sectarian and political reasons

36

Subjecting civil and military employees to compulsory doctrinal courses

1,113

CONFISCATION OF ENDOWMENT FUNDS FOR MOSQUES

19



Violations of Religious Minorities

76

A case of violation committed by the Houthi group

Jewish Minorities

Closure of religious institutions	Displacement + confiscation of property	Arrests
02	64	10

141

A case of violation in which the Houthi group is responsible

Baha'i Minorities

Unfair trials	forced displacement individuals	Confiscation of property	Arrests
25	06 Family 25	09	71

VIOLATIONS OF CHRISTIAN MINORITIES

19 violation cases

intrusions	Killing	arrests
02	07	10
Al-Qaida organization	Al-Qaida organization	Houthi group
	02 ISIS	03 legitimate government
		01 ISIS

2,633

COMMON VIOLATIONS BY ALL PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT IN YEMEN

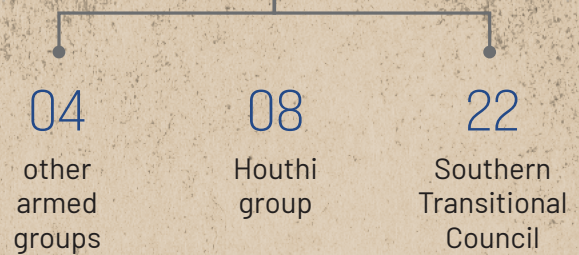
Arrests of preachers and imams of mosques

227



Killing imams

34



The bombing of places of worship

125



Demolition of ancient mosques

17



Dismissal of mosque preachers and imams for sectarian reasons

342



Use of religious platforms for incitement

1,942



FIFTH: FINDINGS

- **First:** The war caused the religious discourse to be characterized by violence, hatred and incitement to the other, and the lack of acceptance of the other by all parties, which led to deepening the division in Yemeni society.
- **Second:** Religious freedoms in Yemen since the Ansar Allah (Al-Houthi group) took control of state institutions at the end of September 2014 have been subjected to restrictions, repression, abuse, displacement and forced deportation, especially for religious minorities in Yemen such as the Jewish, Christian, Baha'i and Salafist groups in Dammaj.
- **Third:** During the reporting period, the American Center for Justice (ACJ) documented and recorded (6,072) incidents of violation of religious freedoms by all parties to the conflict at different rates.
- **Fourth:** The Houthi group solely has committed several violations, including the bombing of mosques and their transformation into military barracks and prisons, the restriction on the exercise of religious rites for other sects, and the forcible subjection of employees to sectarian courses.
- **Fifth:** The Houthi group committed several violations against religious minorities in Yemen, including the Jewish, Christian and Baha'i sects, amounting to (184) violations, including arrest, enforced disappearance, torture, displacement, death sentences and confiscation of private property.
- **Sixth:** The Jewish community in Yemen is one of the least minorities in the world, as its number today is only (6) people. They were subjected to forced displacement and looting of their real and movable properties by the Houthi group at different periods from 2006 to 2019. A number of (64) member of the sect were displaced to Israel, knowing that they were from the original inhabitants of Yemen. Rabbi Yahya Youssef was arrested with his family members for over a month on the grounds of his affiliation to Judaism and to put pressure on the remaining members of the Jewish community to emigrate from Yemen.
- **Seventh:** Christians in Yemen are among the minorities that have been subjected to several violations by the Houthi group and ISIS. The report verified (20) incidents, including (murder, arrests, torture, armed intrusion into churches and damage of their contents).

- **Eighth:** The Baha'i sect is one of the minorities in Yemen because their number is (2,000). Because of their affiliation to the Baha'i religion, dozens of them were persecuted by the Ansar Allah (the Houthis), starting with the arrest of (71) people, including (20) women and (6) children, unfair trial for (25) people, death sentence, confiscation of property, and ending with the forced displacement of (6) members of the sect and (25) families; knowing that the displaced do not have any identities other than the Yemeni identity.
- **Ninth:** The Salafist group in Dammaj village, Saada governorate, was subjected to a large number of violations by the Houthi group from the end of 2011 until their forced displacement in mid-January 2014 due to their embracing of the Sunni doctrine contrary to the ideology of the Houthi group. Three violent wars were waged against them by the Houthis.

The Houthi group committed (1,544) incidents of violation against the Salafi group of the sons of Dammaj, including (199) incidents of killing, including (23) children, and wounding (599), including (71) children and (9) women, while (33) women were subjected to abortion. The war also caused damage to (6) mosques, (346) houses and (3) hospitals, while over (5,000) thousand residents of Dammaj were forcibly displaced to several governorates.

- **Tenth:** A number of (22) imams and preachers of mosques were assassinated in the southern governorates controlled by the Southern Transitional Council. In Houthi-controlled areas, (8) were killed, and in Taiz governorate (4) scholars and preachers were assassinated.
- **Eleventh:** The Houthi group's systematic use of places of worship through which its ideological and sectarian ideas are spread in the governorates under its control, and it forcibly prevents any thought or discourse that does not conform to the group's religious and political vision.
- **Twelfth:** (Total or partial) damage to (46) places of worship due to the bombing by the Arab coalition aircraft, and (79) places of worship were bombed by the Ansar Allah Al-Houthi group.
- **Thirteenth:** The Houthi group completely excluded all preachers and imams of mosques affiliated with the Sunni sect, at a rate of up to 75%, especially in the main cities, and appointed substitutes for them who belong to the Houthi group.
- **Fourteenth:** The Houthi group blew up (27) mosques and (15) schools for teaching the Noble Qur'an in several Yemeni governorates. Amran governorate was the highest among them with (13) mosques that were detonated

- **Fifteenth:** A number of (227) preachers and imams of mosques were subjected to arrest, torture and enforced disappearance. The Houthi group is responsible for (171) incidents, the Southern Transitional Council (39) incidents, the Abu al-Abbas group in Taiz (12) incidents, and the legitimate government in Marib (5) incidents.
- **Sixteenth:** (127) places of worship for women were converted into headquarters and weapons stores belonging to the Houthi group in (12) Yemeni governorates, which caused women to be deprived of the right to perform religious rites on an equal footing with men.
- **Seventeenth:** The report documented that (17) of the ancient mosques in the country were demolished and completely or partially destroyed. The Houthi group was responsible for (6) incidents, the Salafist groups affiliated with the joint forces on the west coast (5) incidents, and the Abu Al-Abbas group in Taiz (3) incidents and the Al-Qaeda organization in Hadhramaut (3) incidents. These violations were based on sectarian discrimination.
- **Eighteenth:** The Houthi group prevented or restricted the exercise of religious rites for Sunni sects for number of (411) incidents in the governorates under its control.
- **Nineteenth:** The Houthi group imposes its beliefs forcibly by enticement and intimidation through compulsory sectarian courses on civil and military state employees. Any employee who refuses to attend these courses is excluded from the public office. The American Center for Justice monitored this type of violation that mounted to (1,113) incidents.
- **Twentieth:** The Houthi group has changed the names of a number of mosques that people have known for decades to new names that serve their ideological, political and sectarian orientations. The report monitored the number of (36) incidents.

SIXTH: RECOMMENDATIONS

FIRST: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT

1. Carrying serious work, through the Ministry of Endowments and all media outlets, to continuously raise awareness of the dangers of sectarian and regional ideas, adopting moderate thought and rejecting violence and hatred.
2. Rehabilitation and restoration of houses of worship that were damaged by the war.
3. Ensuring religious and sectarian freedom for all Yemenis by adopting legislation in this regard and criminalizing anyone who violates the right to religious freedom with deterrent penalties.
4. Returning the Yemeni citizens who were displaced by the Houthi group from the minorities (Jewish, Christian and Baha'i).
5. Just compensation and reparation for the families of the assassination victims, including imams and preachers of mosques in the country, and also for those who were subjected to arrest, enforced disappearance or torture.
6. Activating the role of the judiciary in the interim capital, Aden, and referring the accused in the incidents of the assassinations of preachers and imams of mosques to the judiciary.

SECOND: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ANSAR ALLAH (AL-HOUTH) GROUP)

1. Ensuring that the right to freedom of religion, belief and sect is guaranteed to all Yemenis in all areas under their control.
2. Abandoning completely the idea of differentiation, preference and selection, which the group claims on a religious and sectarian basis, treating all Yemenis on an equal footing without any discrimination based on race, religion, sect or political affiliation, and limiting hate speech and sectarianism and incitement to violence through religious and media platforms.
3. Ensuring the return of all Yemeni victims who were displaced from their country and homeland on religious, sectarian or political grounds, releasing all detained imams and preachers of mosques and compensating them for the damage they suffered during the period of detention, and returning mosque preachers who were excluded from their jobs on a sectarian basis to their work in oratory and counseling.
4. Evacuating and restoring all mosques that have been converted into headquarters, barracks and weapons stores, and spare places of worship during their military operations from any bombing, damage, or total or partial destruction.

5. Ceasing the policy of imposing their beliefs by force on state officials, stopping the compulsory courses based on ideological and sectarian foundations, and ensuring freedom of belief for all Yemenis.
6. Ceasing the confiscation of endowment properties designated for places of worship and not violating them under any justification.

THIRD: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SOUTHERN TRANSITIONAL COUNCIL

1. Immediate release of all detainees and forcibly disappeared based on religious ideology or belief..
2. Uncovering the assassination cell of preachers and imams of mosques and others and referring them to the judiciary.
3. Reducing hate speech, regionalism, and incitement to violence through religious platforms, and allocating them to what ensures reunification and preserves the unity of the societal fabric.

FOURTH: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ARAB COALITION

1. Adhering to the rules of engagement and avoiding completely targeting places of worship during military operations.
2. Reconstruction and restoration of all places of worship damaged due to the aerial bombardment.

FIFTH: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY:

1. Working seriously and urgently to stop the war in Yemen and restore the political balance between all components to ensure the restoration of the civil state that guarantees the rights and freedoms of all citizens, including religious minorities.
2. Providing sufficient support to the legitimate government to carry out its duties in terms of unification and rationalizing the moderate religious discourse.
3. Any future peace agreement must include the rights of religious minorities to religion and belief without discrimination.

**FREEDOM OF RELIGION
AND MINORITIES IN YEMEN**

A REPORT THAT MONITORS AND DOCUMENTS THE
REALITY OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND MINORITIES IN
YEMEN DURING THE WARTIME

DECEMBER 2022



FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND MINORITIES IN YEMEN

A REPORT THAT MONITORS AND DOCUMENTS THE REALITY OF RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM AND MINORITIES IN YEMEN DURING THE WARTIME

WHY?

While violations of international human rights and humanitarian law are widespread, and at a time when extremist groups, armed violence groups and government authorities continue to commit violations and war in more than one country, the suffering of civilians has increased, the most heinous crimes against humanity have been committed, and numerous disasters have led to a rise in the prevalence of crime and the absence of the rule of law, accountability and punishment. The American Center for Justice (ACJ) has therefore come to defend human rights, stand by the victims without discrimination, champion their causes, reduce further violations, promote the values of democracy and freedom, and consolidate the norms of peace.

The war in Yemen and the humanitarian catastrophe that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands, most of them women and children, is among the reasons for establishing ACJ to be among the most important institutions that adopt the protection and defense of human rights in this country that has been intensified by wars for several years.

WHERE?

The United States of America is considered the most influential actor in global decision-making, as well as the most important office of the United Nations services, bodies and programs. Many international organizations and human rights institutions with great reach and influence are based in the U.S. and ACJ has also chosen this country to be the base of its activities.

HOW ?

The American Center for Justice (ACJ) monitors, investigates and documents human rights violations, issues reports and provides legal support to victims to ensure that perpetrators do not enjoy impunity. Moving rights issues in international forums and seeking decisions and positions that support and champion the victims of human rights violations in the international community and United Nations decisionmakers will be a strong foundation and the basis for addressing all violations and breaches of domestic laws, international conventions and treaties.

The Center will also work on numerous programs and offer a range of activities, including conferences and symposiums, as well as producing human rights reports that reflect and coordinate the real picture of human rights, while working in coordination with the centers, organizations and personalities that influence international decision-making..

WHO?

American Center for Justice (ACJ) Team is a group of experts, specialists and prominent human rights advocates and victims of violations. The team has many capacities and relationships that enable it to perform its functions appropriately in accordance with international standards. The Center has a number of consultants, researchers and field investigators in its target areas and within its scope of work.



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