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## **Yemeni authorities must act over sniper killings of protesters**

At least 40 people were killed and more than 200 wounded in the incident, which took place following Friday prayers as protesters gathered near Sana'a University.

“This appears to have been a sniper attack with security forces deliberately shooting to kill protesters from strategic vantage points,” said Philip Luther, Amnesty International’s Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

“Such attacks are deplorable and the Yemeni authorities must investigate and bring to justice those who ordered and carried them out. If they do not do so immediately, this crisis is only likely to deepen further.”

Protesters were reportedly chanting anti-government slogans at a protest camp near Sana'a University when at around 1.30pm local time, armed men in plain clothes, believed to be members of the security forces, started shooting live rounds from the top of nearby buildings.

Members of the security forces also shot at protesters at street level around the same time.

An eyewitness told Amnesty International that “the shooting started from different buildings around the same time and continued for more than 30 minutes.”

Another eyewitness said that most of those killed were shot in the head, chest or neck, many of them dying at the scene.

At least 30 of those injured are said to be in a critical state. So far at least 80 people have been killed in protests in Yemen since February 2011.

“The Yemeni authorities generally appear to be turning a blind eye to killings of protesters by their security forces, raising the question of whether they condone them,” said Philip Luther.

“The international community must put pressure on Yemen’s leadership to take action to stop the rapidly mounting death toll.”