

URGENT ACTION

11 BAHA'IS FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED AT GREAT RISK

On 25 May, armed Huthi forces stormed a peaceful gathering of Baha'is in Sana'a, Yemen. They detained and forcibly disappeared 17 individuals, among them five women. Following international pressure, six people have since been released – one man and three women in June, and two men in July. However, 11 individuals, among them nine men and two women, remain in Huthi custody and their whereabouts remain unknown. They are at risk of further violations at the hands of Huthi authorities, including torture and other ill-treatment or even death. They must be immediately and unconditionally released.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Spokesperson for the Huthi de facto authorities

Mohamed Abdelsalam

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Dear Mohamed Abdelsalam,

*I am alarmed that **11 Baha'i individuals**, nine men and two women, remain forcibly disappeared by the Huthi de facto authorities following a raid on a peaceful gathering on 25 May 2023. This is an egregious violation of international human rights law and another escalation in the Huthi de facto authorities' ongoing persecution of the Baha'i minority- a religious minority in Yemen- in violation of their right to freedom of religion and belief.*

Huthi de facto authorities detained 17 individuals in the raid. Days after the arrest of the Baha'is, the General Prosecutor denied a request for their release submitted by a lawyer. According to the lawyer, the authorities have failed to provide any information on where the Baha'is are being held and no lawyer has been able to communicate with them. I welcome your release of six individuals since then and call on you to immediately and unconditionally release all 11 detainees in your custody.

I am concerned that all remaining Baha'i individuals in custody are at risk of further violations, including torture and other-ill treatment, forced confessions, and unfair trials on spurious and trumped-up charges that may carry the death penalty. Amnesty International has documented all these violations by the Huthi de facto authorities to crack down on individuals they perceive as opponents, including members of the Baha'i community. Since their arrest, the Huthi authorities have incited violence and discrimination against this religious minority, which puts further individuals at risk of grave human rights violations.

I call on the Huthi de facto authorities to urgently disclose the fate and whereabouts of the 11 Baha'i detainees in their custody and to immediately and unconditionally release them. I also call on you to end all forms of discrimination and persecution of the Baha'i minority and all others who are targeted solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of religion and belief.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2015, Amnesty International has documented the situation of 82 members of the Baha'i community in Yemen who have been detained by the Huthi de facto authorities and subjected to enforced disappearance, torture, incommunicado detention or denied the right to a fair trial.

Five Baha'is arrested in were held without charge or trial and without any means to challenge their detention for over two years, until they were charged in September 2018 with various serious offences including espionage for foreign states, some of which can carry the death penalty. Their trial was part of a mass trial involving 24 Baha'is in total – the other 19 were charged in absentia, including the teenage daughter of a Baha'i detainee. The Huthi de facto authorities ordered the release of all Baha'i prisoners in 2020 on the condition of their exile from the country. However, the charges against the 24 Baha'is have not been lifted.

A Baha'i prisoner of conscience, Hamid Haydara, was released in 2020 after his initial arrest in 2013. He was sentenced to death in 2018, and then pardoned in 2020. Amnesty International raised its concerns with the Huthi de facto authorities regarding the basis for his detention, as well as the [deeply-flawed legal proceedings in his case](#), including prolonged pre-trial detention, undue delays in his trial, torture and other ill-treatment, and lack of access to counsel during his interrogations.

All parties to the armed conflict taking place in Yemen, including the Huthi forces, the internationally recognized government, the Sothern Transitional Council, Saudi Arabia led coalition and UAE-backed Yemeni forces have committed crimes under international law and human rights violations, including wilful killings, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, and unfair trials.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 3 October 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: 11 Baha'i individuals (All)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/6874/2023/en/>