

Human Rights Watch

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/26/un-human-rights-council-statement-human-rights-situation-yemen>

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HRC 24th Session: Statement Delivered Under Item 10, General Debate

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Yemens transitional government has started the process of restructuring the military and security forces. Nevertheless, serious human rights violations continue and efforts to implement a United Nations-facilitated transition blueprint have at times met with violent resistance from supporters of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh and other armed elements.

Human Rights Watch welcomes the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in Yemen. We share the view that the delay in creating a functioning independent and impartial investigation mechanism may hamper the credibility of investigations and raises questions as to the commitment to redress and justice for victims of past human rights violations. President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi's government has not taken significant steps to address accountability for past human rights violations, contributing to the continued instability. President Hadi should without further delay nominate the commissioners to the independent commission of inquiry he established a year ago to look into the human rights violations associated with the 2011 popular uprising. We also urge Yemens parliament to pass a transitional justice law that meets international standards because prosecutions of those responsible for unlawful killings, enforced disappearances, torture and other serious crimes will be a vital component of a meaningful transitional justice process.

Human Rights Watch is particularly concerned by the governments consistent failure to investigate attacks on journalists by security forces as well as other perpetrators. We urge the government to take a strong stand against such attacks and ensure judicial accountability for all perpetrators.

The practice of child marriage in Yemen is widespread. Yemeni government and UN data show that over 50percent of girls in Yemen are married before the age of 18. We urge the parliament to resurrect legislation putting in place a minimum age of 18 for marriage for all.

Since President Hadi assumed office, the United States has carried out some two dozen airstrikes against alleged members of opposition armed groups in Yemen, including Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which are estimated to have killed between 72 and 139 people, a large number of whom were civilians.

Human Rights Watch calls on the Human Rights Council to renew its engagement with the government of Yemen and welcomes the draft resolution that focuses on efforts for accountability for past abuses, protection of journalists, and protection of womens and girls rights.

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