

Witness Against Torture

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

<https://witnessagainsttorture.com/2018/01/10/letter-uae-ambassador-protesting-secret-prisons-torture/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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Witness Against Torture
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Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
Attn: His Excellency Yousef Al Otaiba, Ambassador
Washington, D.C.

January 9, 2018

Your Excellency,

We write with great concern about reports of UAE officials maintaining clandestine prisons in Yemen. The June 22nd AP report which so deeply troubles us described gruesome tortures happening inside the secret prisons.

We want to write a word about ourselves. We are a group of people who have campaigned since 2005 to close Guantanamo and end forever any use of torture. Our group is called Witness Against Torture. We feel particularly responsible to confront the U.S. governments involvement in torture. Its alleged that U.S. interrogators have been present in Yemen and, while not inside the chambers where people have been tortured, U.S. officials have possibly interrogated people who have been subjected to torture.

Within Yemen, stories about torture and disappearance of prisoners must have an extremely chilling effect on any individuals or groups who would attempt to demonstrate on behalf of their loved ones who have disappeared and who fear that their loved ones have been tortured.

Recognizing that it would be quite difficult for Yemeni people to reach your Embassy here in the U.S., we are assembling here today to raise questions: How specifically does the government of the United Arab Emirates respond to each of the allegations made in the June 22nd, 2017 AP report? What information can you offer regarding the presence of U.S. interrogators who acknowledge having been in Yemen? How has the government of the United Arab Emirates responded to the estimated 2000 people in Yemen who have claimed that their loved ones have disappeared?

Recognizing that the UN regards the humanitarian crisis in Yemen as the worst in the world, as people face conflict-driven famine and disease, we feel increasing urgency to alleviate the suffering people face and help abolish any networks of clandestine prisons and any usage of torture by any of the warring parties.

Sincerely,
Members of Witness Against Torture fasting in Washington, D.C.