

Witness Against Torture

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

<https://witnessagainsttorture.com/2018/01/10/press-release-wat-seeks-answers-uae-torture-secret-prisons-yemen/>

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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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January 9, 2017

Witness Against Torture (WAT) Seeks UAE Response to Allegations that the UAE runs a network of secret prisons in southern Yemen where abuse is routine and torture extreme.

On January 9, 2018, WAT members demonstrated in front of the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates. They tried to deliver a letter to UAE Ambassador Yusuf Al Otaiba, raising questions based on a June 22, 2017 AP report which documented 18 secret prisons in Southern Yemen where detainees were subjected to extreme forms of torture, which include being trussed to a grill called the grill that rotated over an open fire. 2,000 men have disappeared into the clandestine prisons, the AP report says, a number so high that it has triggered near-weekly protests among families seeking information about missing sons, brothers and fathers.

Also released on June 22, 2017 was a Human Rights Watch report which accuses the UAE of supporting Yemeni forces that have arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, tortured and abused dozens of people during security operations.

One of the main detention complexes is at Riyan Airport in Yemens southern city of Mukalla. Former detainees, speaking on condition of anonymity, told of being crammed into shipping containers smeared with feces and blindfolded for weeks on end. They said they were beaten, trussed up on the grill, and sexually assaulted.

A member of the Hadramawt Elite a Yemeni security force set up by the UAE, said that American forces were at times only yards away.

The AP report notes that Amnesty International has called for a U.N.-led investigation into the UAEs and other parties role in setting up this horrific network of torture and into allegations the U.S. interrogated detainees or received information possibly obtained from torture. It would be a stretch to believe the US did not know or could not have known that there was a real risk of torture, said Amnestys director of research in the Middle East, Lynn Maalouf.

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