

Hello everyone,

My statement today is delivered on behalf of Mwatana for Human Rights.

Mwatana monitors and investigates human rights abuses by all parties to the conflict in Yemen. Our researchers conduct interviews with victims, collect evidence, and visit sites where violations took place.

Mwatana has documented violations that occurred under the internationally recognized government, affiliated parties, and UAE-backed forces, as well as those committed by Ansar Allah - Houthis.

Today, I will highlight the violations concerning attacks on civilians, abuses faced by migrants, the use of landmines, and women's rights violations.

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During the UPR reporting period, Yemeni parties to the conflict launched indiscriminate attacks on crowded residential areas, which increased civilian suffering and led to new waves of displacement. Since the last UPR, Mwatana has investigated 430 ground attacks, where 268 victims were harmed, including women and children.

In addition, civilians were targeted with live bullets. As seen on this slide, Mwatana has documented hundreds of incidents where Yemeni or Yemen-backed forces targeted and shot civilians. In other incidents, military vehicles ran over civilians. These are clear violations of international human rights law.

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Now, I want to address abuses faced by migrants in Yemen.

In the previous UPR, Yemen supported recommendations to improve protection for vulnerable groups, including migrants.

However, government abuses of migrant's rights have increased in the period under review.

During this time, Mwatana documented 76 incidents of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants carried out by parties to the conflict in Yemen and active gangs under their control. After surviving dangerous journeys in the search for safety and a better life, migrants often face exploitation, torture, and sexual abuses. Others have described being held at gunpoint by soldiers and robbed.

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Now I want to address Yemen's numerous violations of international humanitarian law, specifically through the use of landmines and explosive objects.

Despite a decrease in military operations, clashes still occur. As civilians returned to their homes, increasing numbers – especially children – have been killed and injured by landmines and other remnants of war.

Possession and use of anti-personnel mines are banned under the Mine Ban Convention, which Yemen has ratified. Landmines make no distinction between civilians and fighters as required by international humanitarian law, and their impact remains devastating. For example, a landmine exploded under a vehicle returning from a family wedding, injuring 32 civilians, including 24 children. In another incident, a child who lost both of his legs after stepping on a landmine outside his village told us how much he missed playing with his friends.

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Finally, I would like to address violations against women. Ansar Allah - Houthis, began to impose restrictions on women's movement and freedom. In particular, the Houthis require all women to travel with a

“Mahram,” or male guardian. Mwatana has documented instances of women being harassed at security checkpoints. The Ansar Allah Houthis has also restricted women’s right to work, through new regulations and instructions.

The internationally recognized government has begun to adopt some of the same practices as the Houthis. They started to restrict women’s freedom of movement and assembly. Authorities in Marib have also begun to arrest women’s rights defenders.

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For the Yemeni people, lasting peace requires addressing the harms caused by years of conflict and rights abuses. It is time to break repeated cycles of violence.

We ask for the renewal of peace efforts, but peace cannot be achieved without accountability. We call for the establishment of criminally focused investigations to provide redress to victims.

We have a full list of recommendations and questions to the government in our UPR report, which we can share with you.

Mwatana calls upon the international community to put the people of Yemen and their human rights first by making strong and protective recommendations during the upcoming UPR process.

Thank you.