

Urgent Appeal to United Nations Special Procedures

Maat calls on the United Nations Special Procedures to Pressure the Houthis to Release the Public Figures who Led Initiatives for National Reconciliation in Yemen

Submitted for the Attention of:

- **The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention**
- **The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances**
- **The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders**
- **The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism**

On March 28, 2021, the Preventive Security Service of the Houthi group in Yemen detained Hamoud Al-Awadi, head of the Civil Alliance for Peace and National Reconciliation and Professor of Sociology at Sana'a University, along with Eng. Abdul Rahman Al-Olfi and Dr. Anwar Shaab, Yemeni public figures who led initiatives for national reconciliation in Yemen at exactly nine o'clock in the morning. Elements of the Preventive Security arrested the three figures in Ibb governorate, central Yemen, while they were on their way to Aden, ready to travel to Saudi Arabia, and took them to an unknown place.

It is worth noting that the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council had invited the three figures in mid-March 2022 to attend the ongoing Yemeni consultations in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Hamoud Al-Awadi, head of the Civil Alliance for Peace and National Reconciliation, had coordinated with the Houthi political office and obtained the office's approval to attend these consultations, an approval that the Houthis repudiated by detaining him arbitrarily. Maat confirms that this arbitrary measure contradicts the second subparagraph of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms the right of every individual to leave any country, including his own, and Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirms the same rights. Maat confirms that no arrest warrant was issued for the

three individuals, and they were neither allowed to communicate with a lawyer nor communicate with their families, in a flagrant violation of the United Nations Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under any form of detention or imprisonment.

Maat confirms that the detention of the three Yemeni figures reflects a recurring pattern of arbitrary practices that the Houthi group has practiced recently in the areas under their control. Maat has documented the detention of more than 700 people in Yemen from January 2021 to March 2022, in Ibb governorate specifically. Maat has reviewed reports confirming the Houthis' perpetration of about 3,419 violations against civilians from January 2020 to December 31, 2021, including 13 assassinations and about 9 executions of political and social figures in the governorate, in addition to 34 incidents of torture of detainees in the governorate's prisons, in flagrant defiance of international human rights standards and the protections guaranteed to civilians under Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949.

In light of the above, Maat makes an urgent appeal to urge you to use your mandate to intervene immediately and to consider the following:

- Issuing a joint statement to pressure the Houthis to release the three Yemeni public figures, namely; Abdul Rahman Al-Olfi, Hamoud Al-Awadi, and Dr. Anwar Shaab, reveal their whereabouts, and allow them to communicate with a lawyer;
- Putting pressure on the Houthis to put an end to all arbitrary practices and acts of intimidation against human rights defenders, activists, journalists, and Yemeni public figures.