



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Yemen to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its combined seventh and eighth periodic reports***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Protection of women and girls in emergency situations

1. The Government of the Yemeni Republic is the party responsible for applying all the principles set forth in its national laws and in the international instruments which it has ratified, including the right to remedies and accountability and the prevention of impunity before national judicial institutions. The international community must, however, shoulder its responsibility towards Yemen by extending support with a view to restoring the role played by the law enforcement authorities and re-establishing their power across Yemeni territory. The Yemeni Government urges the international community, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and all United Nations agencies, to cooperate with it and thus strengthen the capacity of State institutions to provide such basic services as education, health, water, food and justice, and realize rights, foster equality and prevent discrimination.

2. The Government of the Yemeni Republic understands that peace and security will play an important part in overcoming the catastrophic humanitarian situation created by war, particularly for women, children and poor and marginalized categories. It has therefore responded to calls for peace negotiations that have been made by the United Nations or sponsored by the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, namely the 2019 Riyadh Agreement, the 2016 Kuwait dialogue, the first and second rounds of talks in Geneva in 2015, and the 2018 Stockholm Agreement. The latter provides for an end to the conflict in Hudaydah Governorate in order to allow the entry of humanitarian assistance and ensure that revenue can be transferred to the Central Bank and used to pay the salaries of Government employees. That step would be very beneficial for women working in the Government sector and, indirectly, for the employees' families. However, the Houthi militias have shirked their obligations under the agreement; they have used the revenue to fund the war effort and kill women and children. The militias have not fulfilled their commitment to lift the siege on the city of Ta'izz, which is home to four million people, 60 per cent of whom are women and children.

3. In March 2015, the President of the Republic declared Aden to be the provisional capital and the Government assumed its moral responsibility towards its citizens. Over the four years that have elapsed, the humanitarian issue has been the Government's top priority and has been at the core of its policies. The Government established an institutional body responsible for coordinating relief work, garnering international funding for humanitarian and relief efforts, and responding to humanitarian challenges connected to the armed conflict. The President of the Republic adopted Republican Decision No. 26 (2016) providing for the establishment of a high-level relief committee chaired by the Minister of Local Administration and comprising the relevant ministries and representatives of civil society and the private sector. The committee is promoting efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to all Yemenis in urgent need, in accordance with the principles of independence, impartiality, transparency, humanitarianism and non-discrimination. It exercises oversight and strategic monitoring over all special humanitarian relief work throughout the country, without exception.

4. A partnership has been in place to implement the humanitarian response plan from 2012 to 2020. The Government provides all forms of support and facilitation, shares information and data, and identifies priorities and needs with a focus on women, children and marginalized groups throughout Yemen, without exception or preferential treatment.

5. As regards the disbursement of Government employee salaries, there was a three-year gap in the preparation of draft State budgets in the years 2015, 2016 and 2017.

During that time, the 2014 budget remained in force owing to the coup and Houthi control over State institutions. The Government endeavoured to prepare a draft 2018 budget with the following specifications:

- The Government provided the minimum operating expenses for the administrative agencies of the State so as to enable them to provide basic services, including water, electricity, health care and education.
 - The Government met its obligations related to the disbursement of salaries of the State administrative structure and of the armed forces and security forces, and the pensions of retired civilian and military staff.
 - Despite the scarce resources at its disposal, and although the militias have seized and plundered the revenues of the regions under their control, the Government progressively disbursed salaries, as and when economic indicators improved, for civilian and military staff. It paid out benefits in the amount of 399,534,000,000 rials, or 9.75 per cent of the total expenditure for the 2017 financial year. It continued to make those payments in 2018.
 - The Government paid 2,716 staff members, 30 per cent of them women, who had left for liberated areas. The payments continued in the first months of 2018. A total of 11,323 staff members were paid a total of 3,248,189,299 rials for the period from January to March 2018. The payments continued until the end of the year.
 - Government employees in the liberated governorates, employees of economic units and military staff were paid for six months, and employees of ministerial offices in the provisional capital Aden were paid in 2017, for a total sum of 396,192,315,485 rials. Across judicial sectors, a total of 15,724,626,281 rials were paid to cover the salaries of judicial officials in liberated and non-liberated areas.
 - The Government bore the cost of disbursing the entitlements and benefits of military, security and civilian retirees since 2017 outside the scope of the budget, while the coup authors had seized the military pension resources and funds. A total of 42,809,904,433 rials were disbursed as follows: 4,088,500,291 rials in monthly allowances for 60,094 military sector retirees, including retirees who moved to liberated areas, and 6,535,725,991 rials for 214,213 security sector retirees, in monthly allowances amounting to 498,138,067 rials.
 - In 2018, the Government contributed 211,712,126,890 rials for civil service retirees to cover the deficit in the Social Security Authority.
 - Services and social care were provided to mitigate the impact of the humanitarian crisis on vulnerable social categories. In coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Government repaid social security contributions to 1,500,000 people, 60 per cent of whom were women, persons with disabilities, and poor or marginalized persons. Health-care services worth a total of 308,000 rials were provided to persons with disabilities. A total of 29,000,000 rials were paid to cover the reintegration and rehabilitation of 309 male and female students with disabilities in the Governorates of Aden, Lahij and Shabwah, and 40 wheelchairs were provided to persons with motor disabilities.
6. A total of 1,446,000,000 rials were paid over several months to the families of 2,480 abductees and persons subjected to enforced disappearance. The Government has fulfilled its duty of care for wounded war heroes, offering treatment for 13,301 wounded people.

II. Women and peace

7. A national committee was established pursuant to Cabinet Decision No. 106 (2018) to discuss the draft national action plan on women and peace and security further to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The committee includes two representatives of each of the agencies responsible for implementing the plan. The action plan focuses on the following points:

- *Participation*: Increasing the participation of women in the legislative, executive and judiciary branches, in the security forces and the army, in local and international mechanisms for monitoring implementation of international human rights instruments, in the diplomatic service, and in the areas of conflict response and peacebuilding.
- *Prevention*: Putting in place gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms, improving women's participation in preventing extremism and violence, strengthening the application of relevant laws, and training police and army personnel to prevent violence against women.
- *Protection*: Providing health care, psychological and legal support for women and girls who are victims of violations and violence; establishing guidelines for service providers; implementing programmes to empower women during and after conflict; educating girls; and establishing centres to rehabilitate women and girls who have been subjected to violence.
- *Relief and life-saving activities*: Meeting the needs of vulnerable women and girls, including those who are displaced, refugees or victims of violence, by providing relief and care; involving women in relief efforts and humanitarian assistance; and implementing swift empowerment and reintegration programmes in vulnerable societies.

8. *Representation of women throughout the National Dialogue Conference*: The President issued Presidential Decision No. 30 (2012) concerning the creation of a technical committee to prepare for the National Dialogue Conference. Women made up 17 per cent of the 29-person committee's membership. In accordance with Presidential Decision No. 30 (2012), a liaison committee consisting of eight members, of whom two should be women, was established to communicate with the parties to the National Dialogue Conference. Presidential Decision No. 11 (2013) of 16 March 2013, establishing the All-Inclusive National Dialogue Conference and appointing its members, provided that male and female citizens should work together to find solutions to the main challenges facing Yemen, and that a total of 565 members, male and female, should participate, e.g., some 50 per cent from the South and 50 per cent from the North. Of the total membership from the North and South, 30 per cent are women and 20 per cent are youth. The participants represent a broad sociopolitical swathe of society. In addition to women, independent youth and the political parties, participants include the Hirak Southern Movement, civil society organizations, the Houthis and broad sections of society, such as marginalized groups, displaced persons and exiles.

9. Female representation in peace negotiation delegations was as follows: Geneva in December 2015, 8 per cent; Kuwait 2016, 10 per cent; Geneva 2018, 14 per cent; Stockholm 2018, 14 per cent.

Relevant decisions include Presidential Decision No. 140 (2012) of 22 September 2012, Republican Decision No. 13 (2015) and Decision No. 50 (2017). In Republican Decision No. 13 (2015), it is specified that there shall be nine members, four of whom are women.

10. Women are represented in human rights affairs. A presidential decision has been issued appointing a female Deputy Minister of Human Rights with responsibility for

communications and complaints. The Prime Minister has issued a decision appointing a female Director-General of Governorate Affairs. The Minister of Human Rights has appointed a female adviser on women's and children's affairs, and female directors-general of the liaison offices for Ta'izz Governorate, Mahwit Governorate, coastal Hadramawt and Lahij Governorate. The Ministry has activated the legal committees of the Government, in which women have a 30 per cent quota further to the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference. Delegations to the meetings of the Human Rights Council, including those for the universal periodic review, have also had a 30 per cent quota.

11. Statistics for female representation in the diplomatic service were as follows: there were 126 women from a total of 945 men and women appointed in 2018. Of those women, 11 women were appointed at the rank of ambassador, six at the rank of minister counsellor, three at the rank of counsellor and the remainder in administrative posts.

12. Twenty general directorates from a total of 70 government institutions were reactivated and restaffed further to a decision taken by the Cabinet to establish a general directorate for women within each government institution and in governorate-level offices involved in local government.

13. In 2016, as the numbers of abductees and persons subjected to enforced disappearances rose, the families of such individuals formed a group named the Organization of Mothers of Abductees and Persons Subjected to Enforced Disappearance, which, in coordination with the Yemeni Government, helps tackle cases of abduction and enforced disappearance. In partnership with the Ministry of Human Rights, the group has identified and documented 4,000 people, including 120 female detainees. As of 2019, 400 detainees had been freed, of whom 20 were women.

14. In July 2018, a decision was issued re-establishing the General Directorate for the Protection of Women and Children within the Ministry of the Interior and appointing a woman to the post. The incumbent oversees the work of women police officers. There are 993 female recruits and 45 officers in Aden, 132 female recruits in Lahij, 123 recruits and one officer in Abyan, 218 recruits and four officers in Ta'izz, and 500 female recruits and 25 officers in Sana'a.

15. The Ministry of Justice has also reactivated the national technical committee to administer the juvenile justice project. The committee has continued to meet in the provisional capital, Aden. Women account for 30 per cent of its members, and the Yemeni Women's Union is represented.

Support and facilitation are extended to women's networks and groups active in the area of women and peace, including large numbers of young female leaders. Training has been provided in the area of women and peace and Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

16. The National Committee to Investigate Claims of Human Rights Violations, an independent national mechanism, was established pursuant to Presidential Decision No. 140 of 22 September 2012, Republican Decision No. 13 (2015) and Decision No. 50 (2017). It investigates all claims of human rights violations that have occurred in all governorates of Yemen since 2011, in areas under State control throughout Yemeni territory. From its inception up until the time of writing, it has issued five reports setting out violations affecting women in all governorates of Yemen. The decision establishing the Committee provides that it shall refer cases of violations to the judiciary and initiate proceedings against perpetrators.

17. Dialogue is continuing regarding implementation of the Riyadh Agreement between the Government and the Southern Transitional Council, and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen is working to hold consultations towards resuming dialogue with the Houthi rebels. The Yemeni Government will endeavour

to ensure appropriate female representation in accordance with the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference.

III. Constitutional and legislative framework

18. The All-Inclusive National Dialogue constitutes the second phase of the two-year transitional process provided for in the Gulf initiative as a means to put an end to the conflict. The time frame set in the Gulf initiative for the official national dialogue process covered a six-month period beginning on 18 March 2013.

19. The period ended with the adoption of the national dialogue outcome document in 2014. Under the political agreement, the national dialogue outcomes are the fundamental terms regulating the work of the constitutional drafting committee further to the republican decision establishing it and appointing its members.

20. The President of the Republic is to establish a body to monitor implementation of the national dialogue outcomes. The body is to adopt the draft constitution after ensuring that it is consistent with those outcomes.

21. The draft constitution will then be put to a referendum, which will be followed by parliamentary and local elections conducted in accordance with the new constitution approved by popular referendum. The new parliament will adopt a set of new laws in accordance with the new constitution and the national dialogue outcomes.

22. However, all of those steps towards implementation, including the establishment of the national body to monitor implementation of the national dialogue outcomes and subsequent steps, came to a stop with the coup against the legitimate Government. The coup brought Yemen into a conflict that has lasted for five years.

23. Provisions concerning women's rights underscored at the 2014 National Dialogue Conference:

- Increased social security for divorced and widowed women (decision 156 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Right of women to maternity leave for one year on full pay and a further year on half pay (decision 157 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Right of women to enjoy privacy rights related to childbirth and childhood; recognition that childbearing is a function of society, the burden of which should be borne by both parents together and by the institutions of the State (decision 158 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Special measures to ensure equity for women in cases of conflict and violations (decision 75 of the working group on national reconciliation and transitional justice)
- Trafficking and sexual or physical exploitation of women shall be criminalized (decision 160 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Right of women to make and protect investments; facilitation and access to interest-free loans (decision 161 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Criminalization of assault on bodily integrity (female genital mutilation), sexual harassment, exploitation of women in advertising in a degrading manner, and trafficking in women (decision 94 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Lifting of barriers to freedom and the rights of women, particularly those related to the mistaken interpretation of the purposes of the sharia (decision 163 of the working group on rights and freedoms)

- Timely enforcement of sentences on any women convicted of any offence. The exploitation of female prisoners in an inhumane and immoral manner shall be criminalized (decision 164 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- Owing to the nature of Yemeni society, the imprisonment or detention of women for minor offences shall be prohibited until a definitive court judgment has been handed down; a surety shall be taken during the period of the prosecution (decision 165 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- The minimum age of marriage shall be 18 years; anyone who violates that rule shall be punished by law (decision 167 of the working group on rights and freedoms)
- A law shall be adopted criminalizing sexual harassment (decision 209 of the working group on rights and freedoms)

24. On its list of core priorities, Yemen attaches importance to implementation of the national dialogue outcomes because the nation is entitled to them. Further to their adoption, the Cabinet issued Order No. 26 (2014) setting forth measures to implement the outcomes, and Order No. 28 (2014) containing an implementation matrix. In successive governments from 2015 to 2020, a minister was appointed with responsibility for implementing the outcomes and monitoring implementation of all legal obligations arising from them. A joint technical committee trained by the Government and comprising all ministries was established to meet periodically and discuss implementation.

IV. Access to justice

25. The judiciary is one of the main mechanisms for protecting and defending human rights. Under article 51 of the Constitution, citizens have the right to appeal to the judiciary in order to protect their rights and legitimate interests. All judicial institutions shall fulfil varied roles in safeguarding human rights and freedoms, in accordance with the legal principle set out in article 2 of Act No. 1 (1991) concerning the judicial branch, in which it is stated that litigants are equal before the law, regardless of their position or situation.

26. The judiciary resorts to customary arbitration in disputes. However, those rulings are not final or definitive; the affected party may file an appeal before the Court of Appeals.

27. In order to ensure that citizens enjoy their basic rights at every stage of the litigation process, a human rights department has been established within the Office of the Public Prosecutor. It is responsible for humanitarian issues connected with the human rights enshrined in international laws and instruments. Among other duties, it oversees efforts to uphold the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and other instruments entailing reporting requirements. It also follows up any violations committed by judicial officials.

28. Republican Decision No. 268 (2013) addresses the restructuring of the Ministry of Justice. A general directorate for women and children has been established and its functions determined. Free legal aid is provided to women and children in coordination with civil society organizations. Such aid takes the form of advice for women and children facing challenges before the courts. Such international organizations as INTERSOS, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Yemeni Women's Union and UNICEF provide legal aid for women and children victims of violence.

29. The Yemeni Women's Union, which was founded in 1990, is a non-governmental union that receives annual support from the Government. It provides legal information to women survivors of gender-based violence and can refer

them for legal and other services. The services were made available to victims of gender-based violence. The Ministry of Justice has a specialized unit that provides legal and judicial aid to victims and women in distress who cannot afford the legal fees. A team of female officers manage a specialized family protection unit under the Ministry of the Interior. The unit receives complaints from women against their husbands, brothers or families more generally.

30. The 2011–2015 five-year plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs provides for the development of five new shelters for women survivors of violence in five governorates. However, work has stopped owing to the war.

V. National human rights institution

31. With regard to the fulfilment of the international obligations of Yemen and voluntary commitments and implementation of the Committee's recommendation urging our country to establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, we wish to refer to a number of measures that our country has taken. In accordance with Cabinet Decision No. 35 (2012) concerning the preparation of a draft law on the establishment of an independent national human rights body, several measures were taken to ensure the establishment of an independent, impartial and objective institution to promote and protect human rights and propagate a deeper understanding of the rule of law. In fact, one of the principal goals set forth in the plan to enhance governmental performance consisted in the establishment of that independent national body during the biennium 2012–2013 and the international community, including OHCHR, affirmed that the Government would be provided with all the technical and material support needed for its establishment. To that end, the following measures were taken:

- Cabinet Decision No. 35 (2012), adopted on 17 April 2012, provided for the preparation of a draft law on the establishment of an independent national human rights body.
- The ministerial committee examined and reviewed the draft submitted by the legal team assisting it. In partnership with OHCHR, the draft law was reviewed and submitted to the consultative body and the technical committee on human rights, then publicly disseminated on the websites of the Ministry of Human Rights and the Ministry of Legal Affairs in order to gather comments and incorporate them into the draft, which would then be submitted in its final form to the Cabinet for adoption and submission to Parliament for endorsement and publication as a republican decision having force of law.

32. A draft law was prepared concerning the establishment of the national human rights body in partnership with several civil society organizations, drawing on the experience of several Arab States, such as Morocco, Qatar and Jordan, that have established similar independent human rights bodies. In order to ensure broad participation in preparing the draft law, the Ministry of Human Rights worked with the United Nations Development Programme to organize activities and workshops to introduce and discuss the report, as follows:

- A number of workshops were held in the capital and also in Sana'a and the governorates of Hudaydah, Aden, Hadramawt and Ta'izz to discuss the draft law;
- A workshop was held on 29 May 2013 for the members of the working group on independent commissions in the National Dialogue Conference for the purpose of discussing the draft law;
- A workshop was held on 30 May 2013 for the members of Parliament so that they could discuss the draft law;

- The draft law was posted on websites so that the public could express its views and comment thereon;
- After being examined by the legal team assisting with the process, all the comments and recommendations that emerged from the workshops were taken into account, as were the comments made by several civil society organizations and by international organizations, including OHCHR and DRC.

33. Lastly, the ministerial committee's approval of the draft law was recorded for submission to the Cabinet for adoption and submission to Parliament for adoption in its final version and submission to the President of the Republic for promulgation in a republican decision. Work on the draft law was interrupted when Parliament stopped meeting. We expect that the draft law will be submitted to Parliament once the latter resumes work, something that is expected to happen once dialogue between the Government and the Southern Transitional Council enables Parliament to reconvene and fulfil its functions in the provisional capital, Aden.

34. Cabinet Decision No. 212 (2013) approves the partnership document concluded between the Yemeni Government and civil society organizations. Further to that document, action is to be taken to establish a higher partnership council as an institutional framework with financial and administrative independence and legal personality. The council is to be responsible for coordinating the partnership; 40 per cent of its members should be government representatives, and 60 per cent should be civil society representatives. The number of civil society organizations in the area of human rights has grown, especially since the peaceful popular revolution. Dozens of such organizations have been established in order to strengthen human rights and defend rights and freedoms.

35. There are two types of referral. The first involves cases that fall within the scope of the Government's responsibility for normal affairs. The Ministry receives many complaints every day, mostly about violations of individual or collective rights, restrictions on freedoms or breaches of legal procedures. However, many of the complaints are either already being heard by the courts or have nothing whatsoever to do with any kind of violation. The reason for this is that many people view the Ministry as a judicial body that addresses all kinds of problems and issues. Hence, when a complaint is submitted it must satisfy several criteria, in particular the following:

- It must concern a clear violation of a human right that is recognized under domestic legislation and international human rights law;
- It must not be under consideration by a judicial body, unless that body is particularly slow in conducting proceedings or has committed an infringement of due process;
- The supporting documentation must show that a violation has indeed occurred.

36. The Ministry nevertheless accepts all the complaints that it receives, studies and analyses them and reviews all the related documentation. It checks whether the complaints are credible and meet the above-mentioned criteria. If so, it decides to accept them and initiates the procedure for resolving them in cooperation with the relevant parties.

37. Since the Ministry is not an institution that offers redress, its role in dealing with these cases is to contact the relevant parties and liaise with them on specific measures to resolve the situation. If these are not implemented, the case is referred to the highest authorities in the State.

38. Between January 2019 and December 2019, the Ministry received 530 complaints. After studying and analysing them, the Ministry decided to contact the parties involved in 230 complaints (45 per cent of the total number received) and to provide the complainants in the other 300 cases with advice on appropriate legal avenues to resolve

their issues. The Ministry received 28 complaints pertaining to women. The same actions were taken, and counselling was provided. Some of the cases were referred to the Yemeni Women's Union for legal aid and psycho-social counselling.

39. The second type of case involves violations committed by the coup militias. The Ministry monitors and documents such violations and refers them to the independent committee on human rights violations that was established pursuant to Republican Decision No. 140 (2012), as amended by Republican Decision No. 13 (2015). As part of its mandate, the committee investigates and makes referrals to the judicial authorities.

40. In the period 2015–2019, the Ministry of Human Rights monitored 7,245 violations of women's rights, including killings, injuries, arbitrary detention, dismissal from work and denial of humanitarian assistance.

VI. National Commission for Women

41. The National Commission for Women was established pursuant to Prime Ministerial Decision No. 97 (1996) in accordance with the decisions enshrined in the Beijing Platform for Action in order to help formulate and propose policies, strategies and plans for the advancement of urban and rural women. The Committee was then restructured pursuant to Prime Ministerial Decision No. 68 (2000) establishing a Supreme Council for Women's Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister and with a membership comprising three ministers, the Chair of the National Commission for Women and her deputy, and various prominent women. The main task of the Supreme Council has been to mainstream women's issues into broader State policies in order to improve the political, economic, social and cultural situation of women.

42. The Supreme Council was then restructured pursuant to Republican Decision No. 25 (2003), which expanded its membership to include seven ministers and one deputy minister in relevant areas, a representative of the General Federation of Chambers of Commerce and the chairs of the governorate-level branches of the National Commission for Women. In Republican Decision No. 25 (2003), the National Commission for Women is defined as a consultative and executive body of the Supreme Council and has the following prerogatives: to prepare draft national strategies, plans and programmes on women and submit them to the Supreme Council for adoption. It receives proposals concerning policies and strategies from various government institutions and civil society organizations, considers them and submits them to the Supreme Council for Women's Affairs along with an opinion.

43. Owing to the war, the work of the Supreme Council has been suspended over the last few years. The Government is currently trying to reactivate the National Commission for Women in the provisional capital, Aden, mobilize its operating budget and activate the branches of the general directorates for women's affairs in each governmental institution.

VII. Stereotypes and harmful practices

The Government has adopted a number of legal measures, which may be summarized as follows:

44. The Minister for Health and Population issued Decree No. 1/3 (2003) prohibiting the practice of female genital mutilation by employees in government health centres and facilities. The Government also adopted other measures concerning national strategies and plans. The National Strategy for the Development of Women (2006–2015) includes the issue of female genital mutilation under the heading of violence against women and early marriage. Likewise, the National Strategy for

Childhood and Youth (2010–2015) deals with female genital mutilation under the heading of countering of violence against women. The Yemeni Government has also adopted measures to prevent discrimination against women and protect them from the risk of early marriage. The following are some examples:

- The Ministry of Justice has issued a circular to sharia officials instructing them not to officiate at any marriages of women under the age of 17.
- A draft law on safe motherhood was submitted to Parliament in 2014. The most important points of the draft law are as follows:
 - Care for the woman prior to marriage
 - Care for the woman prior to pregnancy
 - Care for the woman during and after childbirth
- Primary and secondary education have been expanded, resulting in higher education levels for women.
- Considerable efforts have been made to raise awareness of the need to combat early marriage. Governmental and non-governmental entities have carried out a range of activities for that purpose. For instance, a technical group on reproductive health under the Ministry of Public Health and Population has established groups that address all aspects of youth issues, including early marriage.

45. The Centre for Studies and Research on Gender and Development at the University of Sana'a carried out a survey of early marriage in the Governorates of Hudaydah and Hadramawt in 2005.

- The National Commission for Women carried out a study on the determination of the age of marriage in 2008.
- A study on the harm caused by early marriage and pregnancy was carried out in 2011.
- On 9 February 1987, Yemen signed the 1962 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages.

46. The National Network to Uphold Children's Rights, encompassing governmental entities and civil society organizations, was established in 2013 as part of a national child protection network to address three issues that affect children in Yemen, namely early marriage, violence in school and birth registration.

47. A new department responsible for protection of the family has been established within the Ministry of the Interior.

48. In cooperation with UNICEF, the Government has reviewed current legislation on childhood and submitted a proposal for new drafts consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The drafts will be submitted to the Government for adoption and submission to Parliament for ratification. The proposed article 21 of the Rights of the Child Act provides that children have the right to protection from early marriage, and that the State shall take all administrative and legislative measures to prevent the child marriage and prosecute it under the law, and raise awareness of the health-care and social dangers of early marriage for children and society more broadly.

49. As regards equality in inheritance, under article 299 of the Personal Status Act, inheritance consists of the transfer of funds and entitlements from the deceased to their inheritors. Islam grants women the right to inherit. It establishes a fixed inheritance share for women and does not restrict the right of inheritance to one sex. God Almighty has said: "From what is left by parents and those nearest related there

is a share for men and a share for women, whether the property be small or large, a determinate share” (Qur’an 4:76).

50. That right is enshrined in article 23 of the Constitution: “The right of inheritance is guaranteed according to the Islamic sharia and shall be promulgated by law”. The law thus defers to the Book of God and the sunnah of His messenger, as is illustrated by the Personal Status Act (Act No. 20 (1992)). For further information, we refer the Committee on the Elimination of Violence against Women to the eighth report of Yemen, submitted in 2013.

51. The 2014 draft law on childhood and safe motherhood will be submitted to Parliament with a matrix of legal amendments that will be discussed in accordance with the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference.

VIII. Gender-based violence

52. The Ministry of Human Rights, in partnership with the National Commission for Women, has been developing a draft law on violence against women and girls. The bill was presented to Parliament, but work on it was halted because of the militia-led coup.

53. The 2015 draft constitution establishes 18 as the legal age of marriage for both men and women. In addition, the draft constitution harmonizes the agreements that have been concluded by Yemen with international instruments. The draft constitution was to be put to a referendum, but that did not happen because of the coup that the Houthi militias perpetrated. The referendum was supposed to take place in accordance with the outcomes of the All-Inclusive National Dialogue, which were developed with the active participation of women in the National Dialogue Conference. The most important of those outcomes was the inclusion in the conference document of a set of rules that are in harmony with Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). The Ministry of Human Rights, in cooperation with the National Commission for Women, provides victims of gender-based violence with legal advice. Survivors who are unable to pay legal fees are referred to the Ministry of Justice or one of the competent ministries, which provide them with legal aid.

54. Further to the information contained in our combined seventh and eighth periodic reports, which we submitted in 2013 in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, we should like to draw attention to a number of measures that the Yemeni Government has taken with regard to the Committee’s recommendations concerning the need to strengthen our country’s laws on preventing human trafficking offences, punishing the perpetrators and rehabilitating victims. Since the start of 2012, the Ministry of Human Rights has paid special attention to human trafficking, an issue for which sufficient regard had not been shown previously, despite the fact that it is a harmful practice that could lead to the commission of violations against various categories of persons, with serious social consequences, unless it is addressed and steps are taken to curb its growth. Following are some of the most important measures that have been taken to that end:

- On 7 April 2012, pursuant to a decision issued by the Minister of Human Rights, an administrative technical team was formed to study the question of human trafficking, set out a national plan to assess the practice and develop appropriate solutions to address it. In addition, a special unit to combat human trafficking has been established within the Ministry of Human Rights.
- Government officials have participated in a number of events organized by international organizations concerned with human trafficking. The Ministry of Human Rights followed up on the recommendations adopted at those events by persuading the Cabinet to adopt a decision on establishing a national committee

to combat human trafficking that is made up of national stakeholders involved in combating human trafficking.

- In collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, a training programme on human trafficking was held on 1 and 2 July 2012. It was attended by several experts from Government and civil society organizations.

55. The Ministry of Human Rights developed a draft decision concerning the creation of a national committee to combat human trafficking. Acting on the basis of that draft, the Cabinet issued its decision No. 46 of 2012 establishing the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking. Chaired by the Minister of Human Rights, the membership of the National Committee includes representatives of governmental and non-governmental actors that are countering human trafficking. The National Committee is the national institution responsible for developing policies and mechanisms at the national level related to preventing human trafficking, punishing the perpetrators thereof and protecting and rehabilitating victims. The National Committee, in accordance with the resolution establishing it, has been mandated to develop a national strategy to combat human trafficking, draft a national law on combating human trafficking and carry out several other related tasks and functions.

56. In April 2020, after several delays caused by the brutal war, the Minister of Human Rights inaugurated the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in the provisional capital, Aden. At the first meeting of the National Committee, members agreed on the need to activate its mechanism for monitoring and documenting violations, create a national information network and develop a three-year national plan for the National Committee following endorsement of the related bill by Parliament and endorsement by the Government in 2014 of the protocol on combating human trafficking.

IX. Participation in political life

57. The progress that has been made with regard to the right to participate in political life and decision-making is a significant indicator of the success that Yemen has had in empowering women and ensuring they are able to contribute actively to development. Women are nominated for elected posts, participate in elections and political parties and organizations, lead civil society organizations and hold public office and positions in the judiciary. The right to stand for election and vote is guaranteed by law pursuant to article 4 of the Constitution and article 7 of the Election Act, which provides that women should be encouraged to exercise their right to vote. With regard to the judiciary, the Judiciary Act (No. 1 of 1990) provides that women have the right to be employed by the courts and the Office of the Public Prosecutor.

58. There has been a qualitative change in women's participation in decision-making and public life, as evidenced by the number of women representatives at the first National Dialogue Conference. In addition, several decisions concerning women's participation in political life were issued in 2012 and 2013:

- *Government of National Unity*: This Government consists of 35 ministers, of whom 3 are women. Those women hold the posts of Minister of Human Rights, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs. Thus, women now constitute 9 per cent of the Government. Although those ministries are not sovereign or revenue ministries and are more concerned with social services, the fact that they are headed by women constitutes progress with regard to putting women in decision-making posts.
- *Presidential communication committee*: The President issued Presidential Decree No. 13 of 2012 establishing a communication committee tasked with

communicating with stakeholders regarding participation in the National Dialogue Conference. That committee is made up of eight members, of whom two are women (i.e., 25 per cent of the committee's membership).

- *Technical committee to prepare for the National Dialogue Conference:* The President issued Presidential Decision No. 30 (2012) concerning the creation of a technical committee to prepare for the National Dialogue Conference. Women made up 17 per cent of the 29-person committee's membership. That committee mandated that women should make up 30 per cent of all national dialogue constituencies.
- *Appointment of a female adviser to the President of the Republic:* The President of the Republic issued Presidential Decision No. 55 (2012) appointing a woman to serve as an advisor for women's affairs. The decree was the first of its kind in the history of Yemen.
- *Supreme Electoral Commission:* The President issued Presidential Decision No. 63 (2012) appointing two female judges to the Supreme Electoral Commission, which consists of nine judges. With those appointments, women constitute 22 per cent of that body's membership.
- *The judiciary:* A female judge has been appointed to the Supreme Court, 10 women have been contracted to serve in the administrative courts of the capital district and Aden, and six female graduates of the Judicial Institute have been appointed to serve in the courts.
- *Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption:* Three members of this 11-person body are women, two of whom were elected by the membership to serve as its President and Vice-President.

59. The Cabinet issued its Order No. 26 (2014) concerning the drafting of measures to implement the outcomes of the All-Inclusive National Dialogue and its Order No. 28 (2014) concerning the development of an implementation matrix for the outcomes adopted by the National Dialogue; and Cabinet Order No. 64.

60. The Ministry of Human Rights signed a partnership agreement to implement the Young Female Leaders project.

X. Education

61. The State continues to implement the National Strategy for the Development of Basic Education 2003–2015, the overall strategic programme and several other programmes that incorporate the concepts of equality and non-discrimination, in particular with regard to enrolment and improving quality. In addition, programmes have been developed specifically for children with special needs and children from poor families in rural and urban areas. The Ministry of Education is helping to implement several educational programmes for refugee children in collaboration with the relevant organizations and bodies. The strategic programme consists of initiatives aimed at reforming and improving basic education, developing and establishing strategic performance indicators for basic education and a national strategy for the development of secondary education. Following are some of the policies and programmes to improve the situation of education in Yemen:

- Developing effective solutions for children who do not have access to basic education, including, in particular, girls in rural areas;
- Ensuring more effective enforcement of compulsory basic education and reducing failure and dropout rates in basic education;

- Developing criteria for the appointment of competent and specialized senior administrative and supervisory staff in educational institutions;
- Applying quality criteria at all stages and in all types of education;
- Improving and continually developing and evaluating academic curriculums and improving teaching methods;
- Promoting more effective partnership between the State, civil society and the private sector.

62. We should like to point out that the situation in Yemen over the past few years has affected the education process. Education at all levels has experienced interruptions since 2015 because of the war, the coup perpetrated against legitimate institutions and the failure to pay the salaries of teaching staff. Moreover, the armed conflicts raging in various parts of Yemen have seen schools and universities targeted and used for military purposes. As a result, the Government has been forced to stop implementing national strategies that are aimed at narrowing the gap in education rates between males and females and between urban and rural areas.

63. Although the war continues to affect the operations of institutions and the performance of statistical agencies and hinder exchange of information, the Government wants to resume compiling statistics and will provide the committee with updated statistical indicators as soon as they are available.

XI. Health

64. Health care is an essential service that the Government endeavours to provide to both men and women. Health-care services are provided through hospitals and health-care centres as well as through health education programmes. Statistical indicators show that there has been a significant increase in the number of health-care facilities that provide reproductive health services and that there has been a slight increase in the number of other facilities. Statistics show that, overall, the increase in the number of health-care facilities is not commensurate with the increase in population.

65. Women are provided with reproductive health-care services, vaccinations and maternity services. In addition, they receive other health-care services on an equal basis with men.

66. The Government of Yemen is taking several measures to improve physical and mental health, alleviate the burden caused by endemic and common diseases, raise immunization rates, reduce malnutrition rates, increase coverage for reproductive health and family planning services, prevent anaemia (iron deficiency) by fortifying flour with iron, make essential medicines available in health-care facilities, spread health and reproductive awareness, and strengthen the institutions of the health-care system through training and qualification.

67. Emergency care services, including basic services, as well as medical camps, medicines and medical supplies, are being strengthened by focusing on priority areas. The Ministry of Health, with the support of UNICEF, has adopted treatment protocols for malnutrition and established outpatient therapeutic feeding programmes and therapeutic feeding centres to treat acute malnutrition, with or without complications, and launched a supplementary feeding programme at health-care centres and hospitals to treat moderate malnutrition.

68. The following table shows that Government spending on health care increased in 2011 when compared to previous years; however, expenditure remains low and does not meet needs.

XII. Rural woman

69. Some Government policies are aimed at improving the living situation of rural women and their surrounding environment. To that end, small-scale enterprise programmes have been launched and the Social Fund for Development has granted loans to support women, who make up 69.9 per cent of the beneficiaries of Fund programmes. The Fund has also implemented projects to enhance the capacities of rural women in the food industry. In addition, civil society organizations have provided training to rural women on entrepreneurship and sewing. Rural women will continue to need programmes that can help them build their capacities, train them how to run rain-fed agriculture projects, manage livestock and construct schools, and encourage them to educate and enlighten themselves.

70. The outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference placed emphasis on protecting women who work in agriculture with respect to labour market mechanisms, including, in particular, with regard to wages and working hours. Several strategies, the most significant of which are the strategy for the development of rural women and the agricultural sector strategy 2011–2015, have been adopted with a view to improving the status of women.

71. The Social Fund for Development continues to support the growth of small- and micro-scale financing in Yemen. In fact, it is the only government entity that supports lending programmes in most Yemeni governorates. Some banks that operate at the national level also offer loans, but those loans are subject to conditions that customers cannot satisfy. Therefore, very few customers, in particular, women are able to benefit from the financing offered by those banks, which are the Central Bank of Yemen, the Yemen Commercial Bank and the Cooperative and Agricultural Credit Bank.

72. The efforts made by the Social Fund for Development have yielded many fruits, including the enactment of the Microfinance Act, the establishment of the Amal Microfinance Bank and the Yemen Microfinance Network, and the participation of the private sector, which can provide capital at the national level. In 2012, the number of network clients increased by 50 per cent, and the number of active borrowers increased from 42,000 as at the end of 2009 to more than 71,000 as at the end of 2012, a growth of more than 57 per cent.

73. The Amal Microfinance Bank places special emphasis on women because they are one the most its important segments and the focus of much of its activities. In the period 2009–2012, a total of 34,486 loans amounting to 1.2 billion Yemeni rials (\$6 million) were made. It should be noted that, as at the end of 2012, women made up 60 per cent of all borrowers.

XIII. Refugees and displaced persons

74. In June 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs activated the Supreme National Commission for Refugee Affairs, the membership, functions and authority of which was expanded in 2009. The National Commission established a technical committee that carries out work in the field in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). That same year saw the establishment of the mixed migration task force, which has prepared studies and reports on mixed migration in Yemen.

75. The functions and powers of the General Directorate of Refugees of the Immigration and Passports Department were expanded pursuant to Presidential Decision No. 39 (2010). Some of the most important functions of the General Directorate are to receive refugees and provide them with shelter, protection and care.

76. In 2011, the Ministry of Human Rights established a department that is responsible for refugees and displaced persons as well as an anti-trafficking department. Moreover, a team was created to receive, analyse and address refugee complaints and communications in coordination with UNHCR and other stakeholders.

77. The Ministry of Human Rights organized a workshop on the flow of refugees to Yemen and its impact (economic, social, political and security) on the country as part of the first national conference on human rights, which took place in 2012. Following are some of the most important recommendations that were adopted:

- A national law regulating the asylum process in Yemen should be developed, because such a law would curtail several problems and minimize their impact and serve to protect refugees and define their rights and obligations;
- Refugee issues should be included in development programmes at the national level and in development programmes for governorates affected by asylum and mixed migration.

78. A regional conference on asylum and migration from the Horn of Africa to Yemen was held in Sana'a from 11 to 13 November 2013. Countries from the Horn of Africa and international organizations participated in the conference and discussed the challenges faced by Yemen due to the influx of refugees. The participants recommended that source countries, in coordination with Horn of Africa countries, should develop solutions to reduce the flow of refugees to Yemen and help it to mitigate the economic, social and health effects caused by the influx of refugees,

79. In that connection, the Yemeni government has stepped up its efforts on the ground by visiting areas and camps where displaced persons are being hosted and listening to their demands, providing relief and assistance, and communicating with relief agencies and donors to identify beneficiaries and affected areas. The Yemeni Government, in coordination with international partners, is working to increase on an equal basis the amount of humanitarian assistance available to both the poor and displaced from the Horn of Africa and to displaced Yemenis, whose numbers have increased in many governorates because of the war.

XIV. Prisons

80. In 2019, the Ministry of Human Rights inaugurated the General Directorate of Governorate Affairs and appointed a director general to oversee its operations and commence work at 10 of the Ministry's coordination offices in the southern governorates, Tai'zz, Ma'rib and Bayda'. Staff at those offices were instructed to visit prisons in those governorates and report periodically to the Ministry in Aden on the situation in those prisons.

81. In March 2020, in partnership with UNHCR in Aden, a training course on monitoring and following up violations in prisons was carried out for 20 coordinators from the coordination offices. The Ministry is currently finalizing the prison follow-up and monitoring program and preparing the related periodic reports.

82. In April 2018, the Ministry of Interior, the Office of the Public Prosecutor and civil society organizations visited prisons in liberated areas that are under the control of the legitimate government. A report was produced regarding those visits that contains a set of recommendations for the Government.

83. The Ministry of Human Rights and the International Committee of the Red Cross visited Mansurah Prison after it was liberated as part of the field visits to prisons that were carried out in 2017. The Ministry released several prisoners and, having assessed the conditions of inmates and the overall situation of the prison, stressed the importance

of promoting the rule of law, reforming the judiciary, strengthening protection of human rights and public freedoms at the national level, meeting the humanitarian needs of inmates and improving the conditions of detainees, in accordance with human rights principles, ensuring that inmates to be able to exercise their legal rights, by adhering to the principles and provisions of the law, and engaging in cooperation.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the war has created major economic and social challenges that will adversely affect the efforts that have been made to build the capacities of women and national institutions, with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination. The Government of Yemen therefore declares that it is unreservedly committed to promoting and protecting human rights, in particular the rights of women and children, and pledges to work towards overcoming all the difficulties and challenges facing Yemen. It praises the cooperation demonstrated by the country's friends and is confident that the region and the international community will assign due importance to and support the implementation on the ground of the outcomes of the All-Inclusive National Dialogue Conference.

In conclusion, the Government of Yemen would like to express its thanks and appreciation to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for its efforts and the great interest it has shown in enabling Yemeni women to overcome all obstacles on their way to achieving equality and eliminating discrimination. The Government apologizes for the delayed issuance of the present document because of the war and the precautionary measures that were taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Yemen and in Aden in particular.

Table 1
Simulated poverty and inequality changes in Yemen (2014–2016)

		2014	2016
		<i>Actual</i>	<i>Simulated</i>
Poverty	Headcount	48.6	76.9
	Poverty gap	15.5	43.7
	Severity	6.7	30.1
Inequality	Gini	36.7	48.9
	Theil L	22.2	50
	Theil T	25.5	50.1

Source: World Bank staff calculations using household budget survey 2014 and simulated data.

Table 2
Vaccination rates for children aged 12–23 months (2014)

	<i>Full vaccination</i>	<i>No vaccination</i>
Non-poor	47.9	7.5
Poor	35.8	10.1
Urban	57.7	7.4
Rural	35.4	9.4

Source: World Bank staff calculations based on household budget survey 2014

Table 3
Vaccination rates for children aged 12–23 months

	BCG	DPT 3	Polio 3	Measles	Full vaccination	No vaccination
Yemen multi-indicator cluster survey 2006	69	61	63	65	38	12
Household budget survey 2005/6	74.3	67.6	78.9	75.7	59.8	7.6
Yemen demographic and health survey 2013	67.6	59.6	58.7	63.3	42.6	16
Household budget survey 2014	74.1	48.8	67.8	71.8	41.5	8.9

Note: Data for household budget survey 2005/06 and household budget survey 2014 were calculated by World Bank staff based on household budget survey 2005/6 and household budget survey 2014. Data for Yemen demographic and health survey 2013 and Yemen multi-indicator cluster survey 2006 are taken from the Yemen demographic and health survey 2013 report.

Table 4
Gross and net enrolment in school for children (per cent)

	Gross enrolment		Net enrolment		Not in school	
	2005/6	2014	2005/6	2014	2005/6	2014
Urban	87.2	91.2	81.5	87	18.5	13
Rural	68.1	87	61.6	83.5	38.4	16.5
Male	82	90.1	75.9	86.2	24.1	13.8
Female	62.6	86.1	56	82.4	44	17.6
Poorest quintile	59.7	87.8	53.3	85.3	46.7	14.7
2	71.2	86.6	65.6	83.2	34.4	16.8
3	74.2	86.9	67.5	82.9	32.5	17.1
4	77.8	89.3	71.3	85.1	28.7	14.9
Richest quintile	87	91	80.7	86.3	19.3	13.7
Total	73.4	88.3	66.4	84.5	33.6	15.5

Source: World Bank staff calculations based on household budget survey 2005/6 and household budget survey 2014.

Table 5
Number of Social Fund for Development beneficiaries by governorate (2012–2014)

	2012			2013			2014		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Total	825 681	681 033	1 506 714	810 192	661 865	1 472 057	821 506	683 157	1 504 663

Player level	Senior				Junior				Youth				Youngster				Total			
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017
Women	88	79	71	71	120	108	97	97	336	302	272	272	488	439	395	395	1032	929	836	836

	2015	2016	2017
Incidents of adultery, indecent assault and acts of moral turpitude	1 595	...	2 123

Table 6
Prison population in Yemen (2017)

Prison	Central prison inmates																				Grand total
	Sentenced				Being tried				Under investigation				Other cases				Total				
	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	
Sana'a and capital district	663	14	12	2	454	3	10	1	436	20	26	1	346	–	–	–	1 899	37	48	4	1 988
Aden	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hudaydah	292	5	–	–	329	3	–	–	147	7	–	–	2	2	–	–	770	17	–	–	787
Tai'zz	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ibb	413	8	6	–	342	–	5	–	545	6	18	19	236	3	–	–	1 536	17	29	19	1 601
Hajjah	228	4	3	–	225	1	2	–	184	4	2	–	89	1	–	–	726	10	7	–	743
Dhamar	260	2	2	–	125	1	1	–	270	–	5	–	202	3	–	–	857	6	8	–	871
Hadramawt	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Amran	43	–	–	–	81	1	3	–	177	3	6	–	228	3	–	–	529	7	9	–	545
Sa'dah	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	636	25	–	49	36	–	–	–	672	25	–	49	746
Rada'	79	–	–	–	49	–	–	–	194	1	–	–	654	–	–	–	976	1	–	–	977
Dali'	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mahwit	62	–	1	–	70	1	1	–	80	2	–	–	59	–	–	–	271	3	2	–	276
Abyan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lahij	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bayda'	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Shabwah	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Say'un	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ma'rib	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mahrah	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Jawf	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Raymah	1	–	–	–	5	–	–	–	13	–	–	–	16	–	–	–	35	–	–	–	35
Khamir	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	57	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	57	–	–	–	57
Bajil	–	–	–	–	48	–	–	–	25	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	73	2	–	–	75
Hudaydah reserve	–	–	–	–	40	–	–	–	285	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	325	–	–	–	325

Prison	Central prison inmates																				Grand total
	Sentenced				Being tried				Under investigation				Other cases				Total				
	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	Males	Females	Juveniles	Foreigners	
Ibb reserve	-	-	-	-	207	-	-	-	313	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	520	-	-	1	521
Amran reserve	-	-	-	-	37	-	-	-	135	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	172	-	-	-	172
Total	2 041	33	24	2	2 012	10	22	1	3 497	70	57	70	1 868	12	-	-	9 418	125	103	73	9 719