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National report submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*

Yemen

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. The Republic of Yemen is pleased to submit its fourth national report under the United Nations universal periodic review mechanism, in compliance with its obligations under Human Rights Council resolution 5/1. Yemen is convinced, in fact, that human rights constitute a vital cornerstone of national progress and an essential tool with which to restore peace and security and to uphold the rule of law, thereby further enhancing protection for human rights and sustainable development.

2. During the thirty-second session of the periodic review mechanism, in January 2019, Yemen received 252 recommendations announcing that, of these, it welcomed 201. It accepted 182 recommendations during the review session itself and welcomed an additional 19 recommendations during the adoption of the outcomes of the review, at the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council in June 2019. At the same time, it stated that it wished to postpone the acceptance of the other 51 recommendations.

3. The present report reviews the progress made by Yemen in implementing the recommendations that emerged from the review mechanism, most notably its determination to fulfil its treaty obligations and to interact positively with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and with all other United Nations bodies and mechanisms. The report also includes a candid review of the challenges hindering the hoped-for improvement in human rights in the country, and it takes account of the opportunity afforded by the review mechanism to consider ways to address the most significant of those challenges (present and future) and to obtain the support of the international community to help overcome them.

4. The armed rebellion and the coup against legitimacy perpetrated by the Houthi terrorist militia constitute the greatest impediment to the ability of State and society in Yemen to achieve their shared goal of promoting human rights. In particular, the impact of the coup has obstructed the functions of the legislature, functions that are vital in order to develop legislation and bridge the current gap between international standards and the national legislative system.

5. The Government has taken a number of effective measures in an attempt to reduce that gap, including greater cooperation with civil society institutions, especially those concerned with human rights. One important aspect of such cooperation is work to implement the universal periodic review recommendations on the ground, especially through partnership and consultation to establish and strengthen the relevant structures and institutional frameworks; through the application of agreed measures to protect human rights in the context of armed conflict; and through the fulfilment by the State of its duty to meet the life needs of its citizens as they face the immense humanitarian repercussions of the coup and the continued intransigence of the Houthi militia who reject any efforts towards peace.

I. Methodology for preparing the report

6. Under Council of Ministers Decree No. 111 of 2004, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights assumed the chairmanship of a governmental technical committee for the drafting of reports. The committee, which also includes representatives from other ministries and bodies as well as from the legislature and the judiciary, oversees the implementation of human rights-related recommendations and makes practical proposals in that regard while also undertaking monitoring and assessment. It was also responsible for drafting the present report.

A. Implementation of universal periodic review recommendations

7. The governmental technical committee divided and classified the recommendations then proposed the measures to be taken and identified the institutions to be involved. This enabled it to identify which bodies would play main roles and which would have lesser roles in the implementation of the recommendations, while emphasizing the importance of partnership between the parties, including civil society groups. This led to a framework for a

plan of action, which also envisaged support and assistance from United Nations agencies and from international development partners. The committee operates via the plan of action, which acts as a monitoring mechanism or a support mechanism, according to need.

8. Between July 2019 to January 2024, the committee held nine meetings, involving its various members, for follow-up, guidance and harmonization purposes.

9. The plan of action identifies the risks facing implementation, particularly challenges stemming from the armed conflict and the crimes perpetrated by the rebels. It also focuses on efforts to train and build capacity among staff in the competent bodies to help them address the challenges they face. In addition, it identifies the intended beneficiaries, the methodologies of interaction, the nature of the proposed activities and their links to the primary and secondary goals of the plan, and it addresses various commitments, including obligations stemming from Security Council resolution 2216 (2015) and its annexes.

B. Drafting and review

10. In drafting the present report, the committee drew upon the guidance note for the fourth cycle. Thus, the recommendations were circulated to government agencies with follow-up and other measures being taken *vis-à-vis* the human rights-related recommendations. At all stages of the drafting process, the committee embraced the principle of broad-ranging participation based on consultation and joint efforts with government agencies, competent authorities and stakeholders. Information – concerning plans, strategies, policies and practices – was collected from all those parties and included in the report. Drafting began with a plan for the collection of information and data from the competent bodies, which was then analysed to create a database to be used in the drafting and review processes.

C. Consultations

11. Acting within the participative framework and concerned that civil society organizations should play an effective role in drafting the national report, the governmental technical committee created a special working group, called the “national review committee”, which held four rounds of consultations with a wide range of civil society institutions, experts and activists in the fields of law, humanitarian work and development. The contributions they made helped to identify the priorities to be highlighted in the report, particularly as regards the immense humanitarian crisis the country is facing.

12. The committee has benefited from the reports of the National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights as well as from reports produced by civil society organizations active in the field of human rights. In the light of recommendations made by the national review committee, the Minister of Legal Affairs and Human Rights assigned a technical team from the Ministry to collect information from various governmental and non-governmental bodies and to conduct field visits to liberated areas to verify information of interest.

13. The national review committee received replies from 20 government agencies regarding the progress they had made in implementing the recommendations, as classified, each agency in line with its own constitutional and legal responsibilities.

II. Overview

14. A large proportion of the population continues to be oppressed and terrorized by the Houthi militia in the governorates under its control, which are estimated to account for around 25 per cent of national territory. In addition to this, around 4 million people have been displaced, mostly to governorates under the control of the legitimate Governorate, while the number of persons in need of aid exceeds 15 million and nearly 2 million have fled in search of safe havens abroad. All this places an enormous burden on the State.

15. As concerns efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement, the Government responded to the invitation to participate in national consultations under the auspices of the United Nations to establish peace (the 2018 Stockholm Agreement). It has implemented all its obligations under that Agreement, believing as it does that this will have a positive humanitarian impact on the lives of the population, especially in Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates, which are among those worst affected by the uprising. However, the Houthi militia has sought to obstruct the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement thereby exacerbating the suffering of people in Hudaydah and other governorates. None of the humanitarian objectives of the Agreement have, in fact, been achieved.

16. On 5 November 2019, Saudi Arabia sponsored the Riyadh Agreement between the legitimate Government of Yemen and the Southern Transitional Council, as a result of which a government was formed consisting of 24 ministers, including ministers from the Southern Transitional Council. Political developments continued after the Riyadh Agreement as the government rolled out its first political programme; this was followed by an invitation from the President of the Republic for the parliament to convene its first meeting in the city of Say'un in Hadramawt Governorate. The parliament duly ratified the government programme and endorsed the first State budget (for 2019) since the September 2014 coup. Also under the Riyadh Agreement, new governors were appointed to several governorates (Aden, Shabwah and Ta'izz).

17. National consultations held in Riyadh in March 2022 brought together all political forces with a view to broadening participation in decision-making at the top of the power hierarchy and to unifying the national front to extend the authority of the State, end the rebellion and achieve economic stability. In the name of supreme national interests, the President of the Republic issued a declaration for the transfer of power and the formation of the Presidential Leadership Council, which has eight members representing the south and the north of the country equally and is headed by Dr. Rashad al-Alimi. The Council of Representatives held an extraordinary session in the temporary capital Aden during which Council members took the constitutional oath before parliament and the Council formed a joint security and military committee charged with achieving security and stability and restructuring the armed forces and security agencies, under article 5 of the declaration of transfer of power.

18. On 2 April 2022, in order to address the repercussions of the humanitarian crisis, the Presidential Leadership Council and the legitimate Government approved a proposal of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for a two-month humanitarian truce. The proposal envisaged a ceasefire, the reopening of Sana'a airport to humanitarian flights and the opening of the port of Hudaydah on condition that port revenues, including customs revenues, be deposited into the Central Bank. However, the Houthi militia failed to abide by the agreement – although the Government did keep the port open for humanitarian purposes. The truce, which began on 2 April 2022, was extended in successive stages up to 2 October 2022 and, although the United Nations persisted in its efforts to extend it further, it was met with an obstinate refusal on the part of the Houthi militia, which stepped up its attacks against vital economic facilities and civilians. In October 2022, the export of crude oil abroad was interrupted as a result of terrorist attacks launched by the Houthi militia using drones against the Dabbah oil port in Shihhr, in Hadramawt Governorate. In addition, the port of Ridum in Shabwah is constantly targeted and exports – which constituted 43 per cent of State public revenue – have entirely ceased.

19. As a result of this, the National Defence Council issued a decree classifying the Houthi militia as a “terrorist group” and directed the Government to take prompt action to implement that decree. The Public Prosecution Service duly issued its Decree No. 17 of 2022 under which individuals and entities associated with the militia were placed on the terrorist list.

III. Welcoming efforts towards a peaceful solution to the conflict (25, 26, 28, 31, 33, 36, 40, 43, 47, 133 and 194)

20. Despite the serious ongoing violations being committed by the Houthi militia, the Government has continued to call for dialogue and has complied with various initiatives

aimed at normalizing the situation, notably those being promoted by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General. In fact, the Government – with broad support from the political and civil communities – has participated in every round of discussions and negotiations, and it has, from a position of strength, responded to many Arab and international appeals to make concessions in order to end the armed conflict and reach a peaceful settlement. The Government, moreover, has striven to ensure that its forces respect rules of engagement and the principles of distinction and proportionality in combat. However, its efforts have not been met by the Houthi militia with any respect for the norms of international law and, despite the fact that the Government has met all its obligations under the Stockholm Agreement, the Houthi militia has not fulfilled any of its own obligations, as detailed below:

(a) The militia refused to redeploy its military forces from the city of Hudaydah and from the ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ra's Isa, and failed to hand over maps of mines or to remove the mines themselves. The militia also refused to hand over responsibility for law enforcement in the city of Hudaydah and the three ports to local security forces under Yemeni law.

(b) The Houthi militia has disrupted the work of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) meaning that, for the three years following the Stockholm Agreement, the Mission was unable to implement its mandate under Security Council resolution 2452 (2019). The Government has repeatedly called for UNMHA headquarters to be moved to a neutral location in order to enable it to carry out its tasks.

(c) The Houthi militia has failed to implement the economic portion of the Hudaydah Agreement which concerns the deposit of revenues from the port into the Central Bank in Hudaydah as a contribution to the payment of functionaries' salaries. In fact, the militia stole the revenues including those arising from oil derivatives.

(d) The Houthi militia violated the Stockholm Agreement by occupying the city of Hudaydah and its environs on 11 November 2021, following the redeployment of the joint forces and their taking up positions 30 km from the city. This was followed by reprisals, killings, looting and arrests among the civilian population in those areas.

(e) The ports of Hudaydah have become a centre for receiving weapons smuggled to the Houthi militia from Iran, for manufacturing booby-trapped boats and for launching acts of piracy that threaten international shipping.

(f) In 2022, Yemen made persistent calls for the international community to take action to avoid pollution of the Red Sea environment, by exerting greater pressure on the Houthi militia to allow maintenance of the floating oil storage vessel *Safer*, which has holding more than 1.1 million barrels of crude oil and which was threatening more than 200 million people living along the shores of neighbouring States. These efforts culminated in the United Nations emergency plan, to which the Government contributed funding of \$5 million. Hope remains alive in the international community for the completion of the second phase of the plan.

(g) The Government has welcomed the initiative announced by Saudi Arabia in March 2021 for a ceasefire and a comprehensive political solution. The initiative envisages a United Nations-monitored ceasefire, the deposit of customs revenues and taxes from ships arriving in the port of Hudaydah into the Central Bank, the reopening of Sana'a airport and the start of political consultations. The Government has also welcomed all the efforts made and initiatives proposed by the international community and the United Nations. As usual, however, the Houthi militia has rejected all peace initiatives, continuing its aggression and augmenting its military capacity so as to threaten international peace and security and launch attacks on economic installations and international shipping.

IV. Normative framework for human rights

21. The Republic of Yemen remains committed to the Charter of the United Nations and to the international human rights treaties it has ratified. The authorities are looking forward to the regular resumption of operations on the part of the Council of Representatives so that it can endorse a 2013 decree of the Council of Ministers ratifying the International

Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, particularly in the light of a plan – which was supposed to have been rolled out following the adoption of the draft constitution – to establish a national mechanism to address the issue of missing and forcibly disappeared persons. The Government had thrashed out the plan in partnership with ministries and with the assistance of specialized bodies and civil society institutions, as part of the implementation of recommendations arising from the comprehensive national dialogue in 2013. During the period covered by the report – on 30 August 2023, International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances – the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), held a workshop for members of the judiciary, the legislature and governmental bodies and representatives of civil society groups. Papers were presented and recommendations were made to the Council of Representatives for it to place the discussion and endorsement of the Convention on its agenda for the earliest possible opportunity.

22. In the light of the intention of Yemen to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and as part of efforts to implement the findings of the Rights and Freedoms Group at the 2013 comprehensive national dialogue conference, the Council of Ministers issued its Decree No. 203 of 2023 approving a draft agreement between the Government and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to cooperate on humanitarian activities for the benefit of persons deprived of their liberty.

23. The Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights has held a series of meetings with the governmental technical committee on human rights and has submitted a draft decree to the Council of Ministers for the formation of a standing committee, with the involvement of civil society, to “assess prison conditions and consider what steps need to be taken to address shortcomings and abuses”.

24. The Government is looking forward to the regular resumption of operations on the part of the Council of Representatives so that it can complete steps towards the endorsement of the Optional Protocol as well as of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

V. Strengthening the institutional framework for human rights (6, 11, 12, 16, 18, 22, 42, 52, 58, 63 and 66)

25. During the period covered by the present report, the Government has made great efforts to strengthen the institutional structures underpinning human rights. To that end, it has issued decrees and institutionalized the operation of public service units.

26. The Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights monitors and documents violations and seeks to uphold rights. Its work in this regard is carried out by a network of local observers in the country’s various governorates, including areas under the control of the Houthi militia, thanks to partnership with civil society organizations and human rights activists.

27. The Ministry has opened a hotline to receive complaints and reports of abuses from all governorates, and it has issued a number of reports recording those abuses. The Ministry has also carried out 78 activities intended to disseminate a culture of human rights as well as 138 activities aimed at raising awareness, and it has inaugurated an advisory body that brings together 40 different organizations with representatives of the private sector and human rights experts. In addition to this, the Ministry has run 27 courses, programmes and workshops to train staff and build their capacities in different areas of human rights. A total of 2,385 field visits have been conducted, 13,000 violations have been discovered and documented, 9 human rights reports have been published and 34 replies have been submitted to questions concerning the humanitarian situation raised by the Group of Experts established under Security Council resolutions. The Ministry, moreover, has played the leading role in drafting and discussing reports to treaty bodies and in replying to questions and inquiries. In addition, 9 initiatives have been launched to protect and promote the rights of children, and materials

have been prepared in relation to the Safe Schools Declaration and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

28. Policies and decrees adopted by the Council of Ministers have focused on promoting and protecting vulnerable groups. The human rights department of the Office of the President, the human rights department of the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and the rights and freedoms committees of the Council of Representatives and the Consultative Council are all coordinating and consulting with the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights on the drafting of periodic and national reports under the international systems to which Yemen belongs.

29. New units and departments to deal with human rights-related issues have been set up in several government agencies, with the task of promoting human rights in governmental institutions. The most significant of these new bodies is the human rights unit of the Ministry of the Interior. In addition, the Minister of Defence has issued a decree to establish 14 child protection units across all military districts while a human rights unit has been created in the Office of the Prosecutor General.

A. Reactivation of the national human rights follow-up and reporting mechanism

30. As stated earlier, under Council of Ministers Decree No. 111 of 2004, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights assumed the chairmanship of a governmental technical committee on human rights. The committee, which also includes representatives from other ministries and bodies, is responsible for drafting national reports and for overseeing the implementation of human rights-related recommendations.

31. The Government has reactivated this governmental technical committee on human rights which, in March 2022, approved two proposals from the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights (which chairs the committee). The proposals were: (1) that the committee work in accordance with international standards regulating the operation of national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, in which connection it may seek the assistance of experts, civil society institutions and international organizations; and (2) that the committee act as the national mechanism for the universal periodic review, alongside representatives from Yemeni civil society institutions with competence in human rights; in this capacity it is responsible for plans to implement the recommendations emerging from the universal periodic review, following up on that implementation and drafting the national report.

B. National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights (50, 51, 54, 57, 58, 61 and 198)

32. The Commission was established under Presidential Decree No. 140, dated 22 September 2012, which envisaged the formation of a body to investigate alleged violations of human rights in Yemen since 2011. The Decree for the formation of the Commission was based on the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its operational mechanism, on Human Rights Council resolution 18/19 of 2011 and other relevant Human Rights Council resolutions and on Security Council resolutions 2051 (2012) and 2140 (2014). Presidential Decree No. 140 of 2012 was amended on 7 September 2015, under Presidential Decree No. 13 of 2015, which envisaged the establishment of “a National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights, since January 2011 and until the State is able to regain control over the whole of national territory”. Subsequently, the President also issued further decrees to amend certain provisions of the Decree under which the Commission was established and to extend the period of its mandate.

33. The Commission exercises its functions under its mandate in a manner consistent with international standards. Operating independently and impartially, it plays an important role in the protection of human rights and submits detailed annual reports on its activities. Over past years, the Government has been determined to provide the Commission with every facility and to smooth its path so as to enable it to carry out its functions as an independent

national mechanism for the investigation of violations against human rights and international humanitarian law. Several presidential and governmental directives have been issued to government agencies, ministries and institutions enjoining them to cooperate fully with the Commission, facilitate its work and engage with the recommendations contained in the Commission's reports so as to promote and protect human rights.

34. This positive interaction and cooperation have been reflected in the development of the Commission's activities, as detailed in its recent reports and in the steady praise for its efforts it has received from the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, which has recommended it to continue its operations and has provided technical support. Relevant documents in this regard include [A/HRC/42/33](#), issued in 2019, and [A/HRC/45/57](#), issued in 2020. Mention should also be made of a resolution issued by the Human Rights Council at its the fifty-fourth session in September 2023 ([A/HRC/54/L.28](#)) in which it notes with appreciation the work done by the National Commission despite the challenges it has faced, welcomes the progress it has made, such as the regular field visits made throughout Yemen and the improved reporting on different types of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by all parties; the Council also recommends the continued provision of technical support to the Commission. From the beginning of its operations up to the issuance of its eleventh report in August 2023, the National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights has monitored and documented 25,511 allegations of which around 23,230 have been investigated. The total number of victims was 48,866 while statements have been taken from 124,878 victims, informants and witnesses, and 186,871 documents have been examined. In all, 3,000 casefiles concerning human rights violations by all parties have been referred to the Office of the Prosecutor General who, in turn, has assigned a team to review the files headed by a senior lawyer from the Office.

C. Supreme Council for Women and National Committee for Women

35. The National Committee for Women was established under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 97 of 1996 in the context of actions taken to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The Committee – which was set up as a national governmental mechanism dealing with women's issues in a number of areas – is responsible for formulating policies, strategies and plans to advance and empower women in urban and rural areas. Subsequently, the Prime Minister issued Decree No. 68 of 2000 for the formation of the Supreme Council for Women, which is headed by the Prime Minister and has a membership made up of three ministers and the head and vice head of the National Committee for Women. The Government then sought to expand the powers of both the National Committee for Women and the Supreme Council for Women, in which regard Presidential Decree No. 25 of 2003 was issued, which envisions the restructuring of the Supreme Council for Women with an expanded membership of seven ministers, an undersecretary, the heads of branch offices of the National Committee for Women in the governorates, six female leaders representing civil society organizations and the private sector, women's rights activists and the head and vice head of the National Committee for Women. Under the Decree, moreover, the National Committee for Women is to act as the advisory and executive body of the Supreme Council for Women and is to be vested with legal personality and with independent finances. In addition, its remit is to be expanded to include the integration of women's concerns into the public policies of the State; the improvement of women's engagement in political, economic, social and cultural life; and the drafting, in coordination with the competent authorities, of reports under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action.

36. The Government has drawn up and is implementing a five-year strategic plan for 2023–2027 which sets goals, defines interim procedures and identifies areas to prioritize, while taking account of the general situation and requirements of the State and the country.

D. Social Welfare Fund

37. The Fund, which was established under the Social Welfare Act No. 31 of 1997, is intended to help alleviate severe poverty. Launched to accompany a financial and

administrative reform programme and the removal of price subsidies on basic goods, the Fund has run a number of projects. One of these involves emergency cash transfers, regulated under Act No. 39 of 2008 amending the Social Welfare Act, after the provision of aid to beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Fund was interrupted due to the conflict. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) agreed to act as mediator for funding and technical support from the World Bank, so that support and aid could continue to be delivered to 1.5 million families who depend upon the Fund. Thus, the cash transfer project was launched to address the emergency caused by the armed conflict in the country, the aim being to provide life-saving funds to the most vulnerable families and maintain a social protection floor. The intention is that the project is to be handed back to the Social Welfare Fund, once conditions are appropriate.

E. Supreme National Committee for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities and Fund for the Welfare and Habilitation of Persons with Disabilities

38. The Supreme National Committee for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities was established under Presidential Decree No. 5 of 1991. The Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister with the Minister for Social Affairs as deputy, is composed of the Minister of Health, a number of undersecretaries and other stakeholders. It formulates strategies and public policy for the care, habilitation and integration of persons with disabilities and their full participation in society. To this end, it coordinates between the various bodies and agencies working in the field of disability, proposes legislation, evaluates achievements, encourages initiatives to promote persons with disabilities and supports civil society organizations active in that area. In addition, it pursues cooperative endeavours among Arab States, as well as regionally and internationally, and it has developed a long-term plan of action. One of the outcomes of the National Committee's efforts has been the establishment of the Fund for the Welfare and Habilitation of Persons with Disabilities, which is regulated by Act No. 2 of 2002 and which constitutes a qualitative advancement in the care, habilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

F. Social protection programmes in Yemen

39. Action in this area includes the provision of social insurance by the Public Insurance and Pensions Authority, the General Organization for Social Insurance, the General Directorate for Retirement and Social Security (Ministry of the Interior) and the Department for Retirement and Social Security (Ministry of Defence). A social safety net has been created and is being implemented via the Social Development Fund, the Public Works Project, the Agriculture and Fisheries Support Fund, the Social Welfare Fund, the Small Business Financing Fund, the National Programme for the Development of Productive Communities and Families, the Fund for the Welfare and Habilitation of Persons with Disabilities and the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood.

G. Development of national policies and strategies

40. The Government has rolled out a body of strategies intended to ensure the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. These include the following:

- A national strategy to develop higher education, which aims to increase enrolment in universities and other institutions of higher education (community colleges)
- Establishment of the Supreme Council for Quality and Accreditation, which aims to improve higher education
- A nutrition strategy 2022–2030
- An immunization strategy 2023–2025
- A health information management strategy 2024–2028

- A national strategy for the health of children and adolescents 2024–2030
- A sectoral plan in education 2024–2030.

H. Strengthening the independence, capacity and efficiency of the judiciary (53, 55, 56 and 62)

41. The judiciary is the cornerstone of justice in Yemen and one of the most important national mechanisms for protecting human rights and providing redress. Its status as an independent authority is enshrined in the Constitution and the Judiciary Act. During the review period, the Government has been working intensively, in the light of prevailing circumstances, to enable courts and prosecutors' offices to resume operations in governorates liberated from the control of the Houthi militia. To this end, it has provided material support and defrayed expenses for the restoration and repair of court buildings, covering the operational requirements and expenses of the work. The Government has also guaranteed the continuity of salaries for staff working in judicial institutions, including judges and administrators. In addition to this, it has enabled the Higher Judicial Institute, from its new headquarters in the temporary capital Aden, to take in new levies of students to ensure that the judiciary continues to be fed with new young staff. Lastly, a centre for forensic medicine has been opened.

42. These measures have been supported by a body of decrees, including the following:

- Decree No. 13 of 2022 of the President of the Presidential Leadership Council appointing the Prosecutor General of the Republic, the President of the Supreme Court and the Head of the Judicial Inspection Authority
- Presidential Decree No. 21 of 2022 regarding the restructuring of the Supreme Judicial Council; the decree included provision for the appointment of the President of the Supreme Judicial Council as well as Council members including, for the first time in Yemen, a female judge
- Presidential Decree No. 22 of 2022 regarding appointments to the judiciary
- Decree No. 31 of 2022 of the President of the Presidential Leadership Council appointing graduates of the Higher Judicial Institute (levies 21 and 22) as judges in courts of first instance; also, Decree No. 156 of 2023 of the President of the Presidential Leadership Council appointing a military prosecutor and a director of the Military Justice Department.

43. Between September and December 2023, the Supreme Judicial Council launched a transfer and promotion campaign for judges in courts and prosecutors' offices in the governorates of Ta'izz, Shabwah, Abyan, Lahij, Dali', Hadramawt, Mahrah, Ma'rib and Aden. The campaign included the appointment and transfer of judges in courts of appeal, courts of first instance and prosecutors' offices. It also envisioned the creation of appellate divisions and new courts in certain governorates, in order to deal with the large number of cases, accelerate adjudication, simplify access for the parties involved, facilitate proceedings and enable victims to access justice. The Ministry of Justice is striving to develop and improve the institutional infrastructure of the courts, smooth the course of justice and the regularity of proceedings and enhance oversight.

44. Despite its limited resources and the exceptional circumstances it is facing, the Government has expended great efforts to ensure that victims have access to prompt and effective redress mechanisms, via public prosecutors' offices, courts and other national mechanisms. In all, 145 prosecutor's offices have been opened in liberated areas – 27 prosecutors' offices in courts of appeal and 117 prosecutor's offices in courts of first instance distributed according to geographical or thematic jurisdiction. These include general public prosecutors (110 offices), prosecutors dealing with financial offences (13 offices) and prosecutors for specialized criminal cases (7 offices). In the course of 2022, first instance prosecutors handled 15,218 cases while 4,940 cases came before appellate prosecutors and 113 cases before prosecutors in the Court of Cassation.

I. Process of establishing a national human rights institution (7, 9, 13 and 15)

45. In cooperation with representatives from the two chambers of parliament and with government agencies, and having consulted the judiciary and civil society institutions, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights has examined and developed proposals for the establishment of an independent national human rights institution, in line with best practices and with the 1992 principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). In that connection, the Government has studied regional experiences, notably those of national institutions in Arab States that have obtained category A status. It has examined the legislation founding those institutions and the functions delegated to them, with a view to establishing its own national institution.

46. The Ministry has made a proposal to convene an international conference at the end of 2024 – to be attended by official and non-governmental bodies from Yemen as well as regional and international human rights mechanisms – to examine draft legislation for the creation of an independent national human rights institution, prior to submitting a bill to the Council of Ministers and parliament.

VI. Human rights amidst the difficulties of conflict and the burdens of the transitional period (3, 4, 5, 17, 23, 24, 27, 37, 38, 39, 49, 63, 67, 68, 76, 83, 88, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 106, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114, 115, 116, 118, 119, 153, 181, 182, 195, 196 and 197)

47. Despite the success of the Government's efforts to regain control over most governorates in the country, the armed rebellion persists and around 40 per cent of the population continue to be terrorized by the rebels, giving rise to a state of continuous turmoil and instability. The insurgent militia continues to pursue its aggressive and expansionist campaigns against liberated areas, including during truces and ceasefires, bringing the situation to the very brink of humanitarian disaster. This has provoked waves of internal displacement, and many persons – 2 million; i.e., half of the total 4 million displaced – have been displaced more than once, giving rise to grave economic challenges.

48. On 4 January, in order to tackle the humanitarian crisis, the Government updated its national policy on internal and forced displacement. The policy constitutes the overarching national framework within which to address the issue of displacement and to provide care for displaced persons at various stages (before and during their displacement and following their return), thus ensuring the welfare of people forced to flee the tyranny of the Houthi militia. Responsibility for implementing the policy has been delegated to an operational unit for internally displaced persons and the Government has reaffirmed its own responsibility to protect the rights of such persons.

49. The operational unit provides shelter of various kinds to internally displaced families. A total of 84,304 displaced families found shelter in camps during the year 2022, while the unit has worked with local authorities to identify safe and suitable areas on which to establish further camps. In all, 646 such sites have been made available, of which 214 are possessed legally. Thanks to coordination and agreement with a humanitarian working group led by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, approval has been given to "livelihood" projects as part of the 2023 humanitarian response plan. Such projects benefited 2,326 families during the first half of 2022.

50. The operational unit for internally displaced persons has coordinated with the Ministry of Education to integrate 406,755 displaced students into State-run schools, facilitate the enrolment of students who lost their papers during displacement and provide them with the necessary academic documentation. In addition to this, 67 temporary schools have been established inside camps that have no nearby schools. Permanent solutions to internal displacement are being sought in the form of voluntary return, settlement in areas of displacement or resettlement in other areas in which services and security are available.

51. In the light of the armed conflict and its immense humanitarian repercussions, a prosthetic limb and rehabilitation programme has been launched, thanks to cooperation among several institutional stakeholders and coordination with the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre. The programme envisages funding for the establishment and operation of four centres in the governorates of Aden, Ma'rib, Hadramawt and Ta'izz. According to statistics, from 1 January 2020 to 31 August 2023, 166,703 services were provided free of charge, benefiting a total of 51,370 victims. In addition, rehabilitation services were offered to 36,347 beneficiaries, 7,914 prosthetic limbs were fitted and 7,109 limbs were maintained or repaired.

52. Reports confirm that 85.5 per cent of cases involve victims of mines, which the Houthi militia is exclusively responsible for planting and deploying on roads and farms. It does this arbitrarily and continuously, causing regular injuries to victims, who now number into the thousands.

Facilitating access to humanitarian aid and commercial goods

53. During the period covered by the present report, the State continued to promote the operation of the "High Relief Committee" which was created under Decree No. 22 of 2015, amended in 2016, as an institutional entity representing the government agencies responsible for facilitating the delivery of aid. The Committee continues to apply the principle of decentralization in its humanitarian relief work so as to economize efforts and ensure that aid reaches its intended beneficiaries without hindrance or delay. The Committee has continued to operate the 22 land and sea corridors it designated for the transit of aid and the transportation of commercial goods. The corridors pass chiefly through the port of Jizan due to its geographical proximity to their starting point, whence they can easily reach all governorates, thanks also to partnerships with civil society organizations and to exemptions and facilities provided by the Government. For its part, the port of Ma'alla' is used for the arrival of aid from the World Food Programme (WFP). In fact, WFP has been allocated four hectares of land in a number of Yemeni ports in which to build storage warehouses to specifications intended to ensure the preservation of the goods they contain.

54. In fulfilment of its responsibility to pursue international cooperation, mobilize resources and provide humanitarian aid, the Government has during the reporting period cooperated with regional and international partners to organize donor conferences to fund the humanitarian response plan. Since 2012, donor countries have provided a total of \$37,426,129,269 while, during the period covered by the report, the aid received has amounted to: \$3,635,579,634 in 2019, \$1,999,842,954 in 2020, \$2,425,247,763 in 2021 and \$1,087,946,637 in 2022. These sums have gone to benefit all governorates in Yemen, without exception or discrimination.

55. As concerns the armed conflict that has been ongoing since September 2014, following the creation of the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, an independent expert mechanism called the Joint Incident Assessment Team was created, at the request of the Government and with the consent of the Coalition. Its purpose is to investigate combat operations that might mistakenly have affected civilians or other persons not engaged in the hostilities and to provide a mechanism for accountability, redress, prosecution and reparation consistent with standards of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The Team – which includes government representatives, independent experts and members of the Coalition forces – investigates alleged violations by government forces and their allies during combat operations, in which regard it also acts on reports it receives from the Government. The work of the Team is currently being developed and intensified.

Protecting minorities, ensuring diversity and consolidating citizenship rights

56. The President of the Presidential Leadership Council has held a personal meeting with representatives of the Yemeni Baha'i community. During the meeting, he assured them of the determination of Yemen to promote coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of others; to uphold all the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution and the law, in line with international human rights standards; and to administer social and cultural diversity.

57. The meeting came in the wake of an escalation of attacks by the Houthi militia against Baha'is in Yemen. Such attacks, which have become systematic over the course of the past nine years, include threats against the right to life via the imposition of arbitrary death sentences and extensive displacement, including forced displacement. Yemen, in fact, fears that the forced displacement of Baha'i citizens by the Houthi militia could lead to the collapse of diversity.

VII. Efforts to promote human rights education

58. During the reporting period, ministries and law enforcement authorities conducted hundreds of discussions, seminars and training courses for military and security personnel with the aim of raising their awareness and building their capacities in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law. The initiatives took place thanks to cooperation between the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Office of the Public Prosecutor who worked in partnership with international organizations and local civil society institutions. Beneficiaries included officers, non-commissioned officers and prosecutors, and efforts are under way to roll out these activities in a number of liberated governorates in order to reach a greater number of beneficiaries.

59. During the review period, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights have intensified their cooperation in the investigation of alleged human rights abuses. In this regard, measures have been taken to build capacity among judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and staff of detention centres vis-à-vis the conduct of fair trials and the prevention of torture and ill-treatment. Steps taken include the consolidation of human rights safeguards during investigation and trial, the combination of regular and unannounced visits to prisons and places of detention and training in updated investigation methods. At the same time, facilities have been provided for ICRC to make visits of inspection to prisons.

60. Action has also been taken to integrate human rights standards into other specialized training programmes for officers and personnel of the police. Such programmes have focused on money laundering and terrorist financing; hate speech in the context of offences related to press, printing and electronic media; and cybersecurity offences, including the evaluation of evidence when investigating such crimes.

61. Several local civil society organizations concerned with human rights and humanitarian assistance also run capacity-building programmes – including for civil servants and law enforcement officials – on human rights standards and objectives. Notably, these have included training courses as part of a programme “to improve the emergency response of law enforcement officials” which aims to build capacity in evidence collection and preparation procedures. In addition, a capacity-building course has been run for registrars in criminal courts and prosecutors' offices, as a way of promoting access to justice and redress.

62. Particular care was taken, during the same period, to promote human rights culture and education by integrating human rights-related concepts and values into school curricula and modules at both primary and secondary levels. A model for extracurricular cultural and educational activities is being circulated and the first stages of such activities are already being rolled out in some governorates. In addition to this, over the past two years, visual and written materials have been prepared and produced, and guidance manuals have been distributed to teachers, educators and supervisors.

VIII. Economic and social rights

63. Over recent years, economic and social challenges have emerged alongside the ongoing conflict, the rejection by the militias of all peace efforts and the continuation of their attacks against vital economic facilities. In addition, the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic at the beginning of 2020 threw up another challenge that exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, increased the suffering of the country and its people, redoubled the

Government's burden and led to a further decline in macroeconomic performance. This then deteriorated further with the Ukrainian crisis and attacks by Houthi militias against oil exporting ports. All this has had grave socioeconomic impacts, especially when coupled with challenges in securing and accessing the necessary aid.

Right to food, eradication of poverty and provision of social protection (19, 64, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 97, 98, 99, 103, 105 and 117)

64. The country is facing many obstacles and challenges in providing the population with food in adequate amounts and of suitable quality. In fact, malnutrition and deteriorating food security constitute the State's most pressing challenge as it deals with the repercussions of the coup perpetrated by the Houthi militia and its persistent attacks against food supply chains and commercial goods. Malnutrition is one of the most significant causal factors behind the deteriorating health situation and the spread of chronic diseases, diarrhoea, measles and respiratory infections.

65. Addressing such factors depends upon enhancing the response to the need to provide sufficient food of adequate quality, developing health care and improving water and sanitation services. Responding to such needs depends, in turn, on the availability of adequate international humanitarian support, given the State's limited financial resources.

66. The Ministry of Public Health and Population has developed a national nutrition strategy for 2022–2030 which envisages, as part of national development plans, the prioritization of policies to address the malnutrition crisis and promote the right to food. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Public Health and Population – alongside the country's regional and international partners and United Nations organizations – are striving to implement an integrated community management programme to address acute malnutrition.

67. In its determination to achieve the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the Council of Ministers has issued dozens of decrees intended to promote efforts and increase resources for the implementation of the Agenda at the national level, while also averting risks and addressing the effects of disasters and humanitarian crises that hinder progress in that regard (see annex 3).

68. In order to enhance transparency and accountability, the following subcommittees of public service units have been restructured in accordance with the law: public tender committees, investment committees, personnel committees, disciplinary boards and medical committees. In addition, a committee has been formed to inventory the assets and properties of insurance institutions, review their financial balances and investment projects and estimate their movable assets. In cooperation with the Social Development Fund, steps have also been taken to build capacity among local authorities as part of a project, funded by the Middle East and North Africa Fund of the Islamic Development Bank, to prepare local-level institutions for recovery and reconstruction. The programme focuses, as part of the first phase of a strategic plan, on the governorates of Hadramawt, Ta'izz, Lahij, Ma'rib, Shabwah, Mahrah and Abyan.

69. In order to enhance transparency and access, an online platform has been established in partnership with the Social Development Fund, which the Fund and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation use to develop their strategic plans. The purpose is to delineate a general framework for local development and to design, develop and roll out an online system for assessing resources and for monitoring the implementation of the Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY) project, which is being run by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the European Union and in partnership with the Ministry of Local Administration.

Right to health (19, 42, 87, 92, 98, 100, 102, 104, 107, 109, 110, 112 and 113)

70. The Government exerted every energy to reduce the imminent risks to the health and life of the population posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It took preventive and precautionary measures, including several exceptional measures, to contain the pandemic and to minimize its effects and consequences on physical and mental health, and its socioeconomic repercussions. An emergency committee to tackle COVID-19 was formed under the Prime

Minister and issued a body of guidelines and instructions dictating closure periods for border crossings and markets as well as area specific guidance for the competent government agencies. The committee also published instructions regulating entry and exit across Yemeni border posts, while the Government identified isolation sites in the governorates and issued guidance on how they should be run.

71. Among the actions it took, the Government cooperated with civil society institutions at the local level and educational institutions in the governorates to raise awareness among the community at large. It also procured vaccines and protective equipment, and it highlighted the importance of vaccination and encouraged the population to get vaccinated. It also announced the location of vaccination centres across all the governorates and set up special isolation centres, facilitating access and transportation thereto for confirmed or suspected cases of infection.

72. The Ministry of Education took a number of precautionary measures. These included social distancing, the alteration of the school timetable to three rather than two periods and the continuity of education during peak waves of infection by delivering classes via educational television channels and online platforms, while also taking account of the shortcomings of the communications network. In cooperation with international partners, the Ministry provided protective equipment such as sterilizers, masks and gloves, and it prepared a guide entitled “Precautionary measures against novel coronavirus (COVID-19)”. In cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank and the Social Development Fund, it also ran a campaign for a safe return to education and it developed a plan to train teaching staff on how to deal with the pandemic.

73. Thanks to close partnership between the Ministry of Health and United Nations organizations, and the support of donors notably the World Bank, the health-care system has been preserved from collapse; in fact, it has improved on many fronts. According to data on resources and health services, the operational status of health facilities improved from 51 per cent of facilities fully functioning in 2020 to 60.5 per cent at the end of 2023.

74. In early 2023, in order to ensure that the right to health and medical attention is given the priority it deserves, the Ministry of Health granted the General Directorate of Health Information and Research sole responsibility for health information management. An official health information platform was launched – having adopted and adapted an online platform for the application of the DHIS2 system – which covers most of the services provided in health-care facilities. Information system teams were created, the health information management strategy 2024–2028 was developed and rolled out, a technical and administrative infrastructure was created for the General Directorate of Health Information and Research and new health information management offices were opened in the governorates.

75. The Ministry of Health has run several child vaccination campaigns; notably a campaign to promote the polio vaccine for children under 5, which benefited around 1.3 million children. In addition, 1,267,082 children were immunized against measles and rubella in September 2023, while the anti-malaria programme has seen antimalarials delivered to 514 health facilities in 127 districts. An awareness-raising campaign has been run to combat dengue fever in 24 districts and around 1 million treated mosquito nets for the protection of 2 million citizens have been distributed in 35 districts.

76. The Ministry of Health is currently implementing an integrated health-care system that aims to provide global care. In doing so, it is drawing on other countries’ experiences, as illustrated at international and regional conferences.

77. The exceptional circumstances the country has been experiencing since the coup of the Houthi militia in September 2014 have had an impact on people’s right to housing, chiefly on two fronts. Firstly, the militia has appropriated citizens’ land and property, either by seizing it and expelling the residents and owners, or by exploiting it to obtain assets that are then used to finance combat operations. This has increased the number of displaced persons in areas under militia control to around 1.5 million. Secondly, more than three million residents of those areas have been displaced to liberated governorates under the control of the legitimate Government, placing a great burden on the authorities and their partner institutions.

78. A number of the liberated governorates that border on areas under militia control remain under constant threat of attack. This discourages residents of those governorates from building or purchasing new homes thereby limiting the possibilities of urban expansion.

79. The Government has sought to provide aid to displaced persons in liberated governorates, both by providing alternative housing, if available, or by building and maintaining temporary shelters, either masonry dwellings or tents equipped to accommodate changes in weather and climate. It also assists displaced persons who have built their own shelters using other means.

Right to education (19, 42, 87, 92, 98, 100, 102, 104, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127 and 199)

80. Throughout the reporting period, the Government has pursued efforts to provide free education at all levels (primary, secondary and university) for all citizens on an equal footing. It has also striven to provide textbooks, develop curricula and educational modules and train teachers and school staff. In addition, the Government has sought to maintain school buildings and facilities and to repair those damaged during attacks by the Houthi militia.

81. In the light of the repercussions of the armed conflict, and in order to counter the phenomena of school dropout and out-of-school children, the Directorate for Remedial Education has established an institution to educate and protect children who have dropped out of school or who are not enrolled in school at all. Such children are offered accelerated courses with a view to integrating them into public education. The Government has focused particular attention on vocational and technical education aimed at helping children from the most unfortunate families find employment and generate an income. Special schools for girls have been opened as well as centres for literacy and adult education.

82. As part of its efforts to prevent school dropout, the Ministry of Education has exempted students of both sexes from the obligation to wear school uniform. It has provided remedial education and repeat classes for children at risk of dropping out and, in cooperation with international partners, it has sought to provide students with school bags. In cooperation with WFP, moreover, it has been providing school meals.

83. Cooperating with international partners, the Ministry of Education has been working to open schools for girls. It has also launched “livelihood” programmes to support girls’ schooling in rural areas by providing cash incentives conditional on families undertaking to educate their girls, and it has provided such families with food baskets. Female graduates from high school and university are being engaged as teachers in rural areas, once they have completed teacher training programmes.

84. In the area of literacy and adult education, the literacy department of the Ministry of Education is implementing the “livelihood” programme, which has been expanded to include the provision of vocational training for families in areas such as sewing and weaving. This can then generate earning opportunities and thus attract other beneficiaries. Alongside this is the “rural resilience” programme, which is being rolled out over three years with funding from the European Union and the Swedish International Development Agency. The programme, which is overseen by UNDP, is being run in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and WFP. The Government is seeking to relaunch its pro-literacy efforts by opening new adult education centres and hiring new teachers.

85. A “safe schools” protocol has been signed and work has been done to clear schools and educational institutions of mines, while training has been provided on how to deal with hazardous materials. An inclusive education unit has been created as part of the Ministry of Education to ensure that education is available to children with disabilities. The Ministry of Education has also established the Directorate for Remedial Education, which seeks to provide a second opportunity to children of both sexes who have dropped out of school and which, to some extent, has been able to provide community education and accelerated courses for children aged between 6 and 15.

86. The Government has been seeking to address and adapt to the negative impact of the conflict. In particular, it has been continuing to provide education to students from displaced

families, supplying them with new documentation and re-enrolling them in the educational process, and it has provided remedial education to enable children who missed out on educational opportunities to catch up with their peers. In addition to this, it has enabled displaced teachers to return to work in liberated governorates. At the same time, refugee children from Somalia and Ethiopia have been integrated into school thanks to an independent educational unit which works to ensure that refugees are able to enjoy their right to education.

IX. Promoting the rights of vulnerable groups

87. The suffering of the most vulnerable groups has only increased as a consequence of the socioeconomic turmoil caused by the ongoing uprising of the Houthi militia. Displaced persons are among the most affected, alongside other large segments of the population who stand in need of aid to meet their everyday needs as they face the humanitarian repercussions of the continuing conflict and the terrorist attacks of the Houthi militias against oil exporting ports.

88. Despite these challenges, the Government has worked throughout the review period to promote women's rights with policies intended to promote their political and social empowerment.

A. Women's rights (21, 44, 48, 50, 76, 98, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 154, 168, 191, 192, 199, 200 and 201)

Political empowerment of women

89. Over the past four years, one of the Government's main goals has been to enhance women's participation in political life, with respect both to occupying decision-making positions in the executive and the judiciary and to integration into governmental bodies and institutions. The authorities work constantly to increase the quota of women in leadership roles and a number of decrees to that effect have been issued, including the first ever appointment of a woman as a member of the Supreme Judicial Council. Moreover, under Decree No. 155 of 2023 of the President of the Presidential Leadership Council, eight female judges were appointed to the Supreme Court and one to the Office of the Public Prosecutor. In all, there are 271 female judges and assistant judges, including 37 prosecutors. Furthermore, as part of public plans and programmes intended to promote the gender perspective, scores of women have been employed in ministerial departments, government offices and the governorates.

90. In the area of education, the Government has adopted policies to reduce the gender gap in education, as part of citizenship rights and in accordance with article 54 of the Constitution. It has also adopted plans and provided incentives aimed at encouraging girls and their families, particularly in rural areas, to enrol in school and to remain there without dropping out. For its part, the Yemen Women's Union has intensified its efforts to provide reproductive health care and education to mothers, underscoring the importance of family planning and drawing attention to health risks.

91. The Government is seeking to accelerate the fulfilment of its obligations under the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. At the same time, work is underway to consolidate the family protection department in the Ministry of the Interior, which is made up of female police officers and which receives reports and complaints from women, including those made against spouses, siblings or parents.

92. The Government and its civil society partners are systematically bolstering capacity to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and other subsequent resolutions aimed at protecting women in armed conflict and enhancing their role in peacebuilding. Action is also being taken, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to apply the United Nations 1951 Convention

relating to the Status of Refugees, while efforts are being made to implement and raise awareness about the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts. Partnering with governmental bodies and civil society organizations, the Government has developed a national plan on women, peace and security with a view to implementing the relevant Security Council resolution, protecting women during conflict and post-conflict and boosting their participation in socioeconomic development.

93. The Government attaches great importance to strengthening mechanisms wherewith to monitor, report and redress crimes of sexual violence. Victims receive support, notably from the Yemen Women's Union, while prosecutors' offices network with one another and seek to galvanize the courts to provide justice and redress. Thanks to support from the Legal Aid Fund, qualified lawyers are available to give legal assistance, in coordination with bar associations at the governorate level. Legal assistance is also provided by the branch offices of the Yemen Women's Union in the governorates, and the Union has set up a shelter for female victims of violence in the city of Ta'izz.

94. The Government has also taken steps to protect women against violence and to empower them economically, including the creation of two centres for the rehabilitation of female victims of violence, one in Ta'izz Governorate and one in Ma'rib Governorate. It has also organized lectures on security and peace during armed conflicts and developed a guide to unify procedures for the protection and economic empowerment of women and girls who suffer violence in Yemen. Lectures have also been delivered to raise awareness among women and children about COVID-19, and preventive equipment and supplies have been distributed. By 2023, a total of 79,998 women and 5,484 girls had received training regarding the elimination of gender-based violence.

B. Children's rights (44, 48, 50, 76, 98, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179 and 180)

95. The Government has been striving to promote children's rights, also in the field of justice for children. In August 2022, a special "juvenile justice system" was inaugurated under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice while a directorate dealing with children and the assets of minors was opened as part of the Courts and Documentation Division. To implement the "juvenile justice system", Ministerial Decree No. 15 of 2019 was issued to establish a technical committee that includes representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, the National Committee for Women, the Yemen Women's Union, the Office of the Public Prosecutor and civil society organizations. Four capacity-building courses have been run for law enforcement officials specializing in juvenile justice and four shelter and reception centres for children have been opened offering services such as psychological care, as part of a "friendly space" initiative that has benefited 1,227 children.

96. The Government has been determinedly pursuing operational measures to promote human rights and prevent the recruitment of child soldiers. Thanks to those measures, the name of Yemen was removed from the 2021 report of the United Nations Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/76/871-S/2022/493), also in view of the progress made in implementing the 2014 action plan and the 2018 road map signed by the Government and the United Nations. The Government has also enacted a body of decrees including, notably, the following:

- Decrees No. 91 of 2018 and No. 109 of 2018 of the Council of Ministers in which the Government reaffirmed its commitment to the agreement reached in 2014 regarding the formation of the Joint Technical Committee on the Prevention of Child Recruitment, with members drawn from all competent governmental bodies.
- The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces issued Order No. 2.Q.A/12 of 2020 to prevent the recruitment of children into the ranks of the armed forces or the security services. This is a military order that aims to prevent children under the age of 18 from

being recruited into the armed forces and directs that anyone violating its provisions is to be referred to the military courts.

- Six hundred copies of documents containing military instructions and orders were distributed as part of a programme of field visits to military regions during the review period. The documents – delivered into the hands of first- and second-ranking military commanders – comprise military directives issued by the Minister of Defence and the Minister of the Interior in order to promote human rights and international humanitarian law.
- Instruction No. 157 of the Minister of Defence, dated 14 November 2022, envisaged the appointment of 80 focal points and 41 child protection officers in all units and formations belonging to the military or security forces. Three training courses have been held for the focal points as well as four meetings of members of the Joint Technical Committee and 14 meetings of members of the quartet formed by the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.
- The child protection unit of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour has been incorporated into the Joint Operations Room and its functions expanded to cover other complaints and communications departments as well as the military courts.

C. Rights of persons with disabilities

97. The Government is continuing to roll out policies to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities under the relevant treaties. In that connection, national policies have been formulated intended to empower persons with disabilities also by building capacity among staff in relevant government departments and training them in mechanisms to deal with cases of disability. Seminars have been held to examine ways in which to achieve the desired objectives.

98. The Fund for the Welfare and Habilitation of Persons with Disabilities seeks to meet the needs of this important segment of society. The Fund serves a number of functions, including that of providing its beneficiaries with financial and in-kind assistance, either directly or via partnerships with civil society institutions. The Fund also runs its own habilitation programmes.

99. Steps have been taken to monitor and evaluate the services provided to persons with disabilities within the framework of the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The publication of a local sign language dictionary has been envisaged in a Council decree to update and digitalize the Arabic Sign Language Dictionary for Deaf Persons, a tool intended to facilitate communication among deaf persons throughout the Arab world. A projected hospital for persons with disabilities, furnished with medical and therapeutic equipment, was supported by a 2022 decree of the Council of Ministers to raise levies for the Fund for the Welfare and Habilitation of Persons with Disabilities. The number of beneficiaries rose to 24,888 in 2023 from a previous figure of 15,498.

100. As concerns the rights of refugees, despite the many challenges facing the country in the light of the persistent armed conflict, the Government remains determined to fulfil its obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, and under other relevant treaties. The State has a great responsibility towards the refugees who continue to flow into the country from neighbouring States. Currently, there are more than one million refugees in Yemen who are treated under the same local norms as are applicable to Yemeni citizens. Most of the refugees come from the Horn of Africa, particularly Somalia and Ethiopia.

101. The authorities cooperate closely with the local UNHCR office to coordinate joint actions on refugee-related issues, as part of the general development programmes of the State and the development programmes of governorates most affected by refugees and mixed migration.

D. Combating human trafficking (69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78 and 151)

102. The State has ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Forced Labour Convention.

103. In line with the obligations arising from those instruments, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights has reached out to other ministries and bodies with a view to drafting a national strategy to combat human trafficking. Approval has been given for a programme to protect children against trafficking and a national technical committee to combat trafficking, established under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 6 of 2013, has resumed operations.

X. Public rights and freedoms

104. Despite the challenges posed by the uprising of the Houthi militia, its ongoing armed aggressions and its systematic violations of fundamental human rights, the legitimate Government continues to make every possible effort to protect rights and freedoms under the Constitution and the law. To that end, it is seeking to improve the enforcement of the law in a manner consistent with international human rights standards until such time as stability can be restored, peace achieved and national legislation brought into line with international human rights obligations.

Limiting the use of the death penalty and working to stop arbitrary detention, torture and enforced disappearance (29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 41, 45, 46, 59, 60, 65 and 101)

105. The Government protects the right to life and, although the law admits the use of the death penalty, the courts have been careful to limit its enforcement only to the most severe offences. For its part, the executive exercises every care to keep the enforcement of definitive death sentences to an absolute minimum.

106. The issuance of definitive death sentences is surrounded by numerous legal safeguards. Essentially, such sentences are applicable only to crimes that affect the right to life, and they cannot be enforced against persons under the age of 18 or over the age of 70. Moreover, the law envisages the right to appeal against a death penalty; in fact, no death sentence can become definitive until the preliminary verdict has been appealed and unless a majority of the judges hearing the case agree. A death sentence cannot be carried out without the approval of the President of the Republic.

107. In contrast to this, the Houthi militia continues to commit violations against the right to life, with 14,032 documented victims between the end of September 2014 and the end of December 2023, including 300 victims of summary rulings issued by illegal courts without even minimum standards of justice. And there are fears that the number of victims of unfair trials will massively increase as death sentences have been handed down by Houthi courts against around 4,300 people, who remain at imminent risk of execution.

Combating arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment

108. During the period covered by the present report, the Government has been stepping up its efforts to apply the relevant laws in a manner consistent with international human rights standards. Under the law, the Prisons Service of the Ministry of the Interior is the body chiefly responsible for the administration of prisons while the Public Prosecution Service plays an important monitoring and coordinating role with regard to ensuring the legality of detention. The Public Prosecution Service, in fact, has a section for prisons, which is headed by a judge who is directly responsible to the Public Prosecutor and who has deputies in each governorate working to ensure that all persons deprived of liberty are being detained legally, to follow up on prisoners' release orders, to monitor prison conditions, to receive complaints and to investigate any and all allegations and violations.

109. The Government has been at great pains to consolidate the system of criminal proceedings, administer justice and provide redress. In that regard, it has relaunched the operation of prosecutors' offices and courts in liberated governorates, meeting their needs to ensure that they are able to function properly and rebuilding, renovating and furnishing buildings that house courts and prosecutors' offices.

110. The Government wishes to make it clear that there are no political detainees in its prisons. The President of the Presidential Leadership Council has ordered a comprehensive review of prison conditions with a view to ascertaining that all detentions are legal and to addressing any complaints in that regard. Prosecutors' offices regularly inspect places of deprivation of liberty and put a stop to any instances of illegal arbitrary detention.

111. The Government continues to express its concern for the safety of persons who have been arbitrarily detained or enforcedly disappeared in prisons run by the Houthi terrorist militia. These include human rights activists, media professionals, intellectuals and members of minority groups, who have been arbitrarily and extrajudicially tried and sentenced, in some cases to death and in others to lengthy prison sentences.

112. The Government has focused particular attention on these victims in the context the prisoner exchange agreements, under which it has released thousands of militia fighters captured during attacks against the Yemeni people in exchange for hundreds of civilians unlawfully detained by the militia. The Government looks forward to the release of all persons arbitrarily detained by the militia who have become "hostages", used by the militia to exert pressure on the legitimate Government.

113. The Houthi militia have continued to violate the right to freedom, personal security and physical integrity, as is evident from the documented arbitrary detention of nearly 28,000 people, including 2,277 documented cases of severe torture that endangered the safety and lives of those affected. Fears persist for the lives and physical integrity of the many people who remain in the hands of the militia.

XI. Cooperation with United Nations mechanisms and compliance with international obligations

114. During the reporting period, Yemen has remained committed to its cooperation and positive interaction with all parts of the United Nations human rights system. As concerns the country's engagement with the human rights treaty bodies, the governmental technical committee on human rights (headed by the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights) has developed an operational methodology and is working steadily to meet the State's periodic reporting obligations to those bodies and to bridge the gap that opened during the previous reporting cycle. A committee was formed under Council of Ministers Decree No. 4 of 2020 to develop a mechanism for dealing with the humanitarian crisis and to facilitate the work of relief bodies and international organizations.

115. Yemen presented its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 29 October 2021, and its third periodic report under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, accompanied by its reply to the list of issues, between 20 and 23 February 2023. The Government is now seeking to complete its outstanding periodic reports so as to present them to the relevant treaty bodies within the required deadlines. It also undertakes to reply to all queries and communications it receives from the special procedures of the Human Rights Council in order to promote a better and more credible picture of the human rights situation in the country.

116. The Government has approved the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Moreover, under Decree No. 38 of 2022, Yemen ratified the Statute of the Women's Development Organization of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. The State has also adopted an agreement for regional cooperation on aquaculture and fisheries management in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and an emergency plan for food security in the agriculture and fisheries sector.

117. During the review period, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights held 53 meetings with diplomats and representatives of the United Nations, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. During those meetings, the Ministry provided all the information requested regarding strengthened measures in two areas: prohibiting the recruitment of children and preventing the use of children in armed conflict.

118. The Government has actively engaged in the meetings of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations and it has provided replies and explanations concerning the human rights situation in the country. It has helped towards formulating global guidelines for the promotion of human rights around the world and it is committed to ever greater cooperation between the Yemen office of OHCHR and the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

XII. Needs and challenges

119. Yemen has been paying the price of the (unlawful) international tolerance shown towards the crimes of the Houthi militia over previous years. The current challenges are firm proof of the soundness of the position taken by the legitimate Government, which has been met with disappointment by the international community over the past eight years. However, the international community must be aware that, unless it focuses on putting an end to the rebellion and restoring State sovereignty, any action it takes to counter Houthi threats against global shipping and trade will still leave regional instability as a serious threat to regional and international security.

Other key challenges

- The fact that the Houthi militia continues to control parts of the country and to hold sway over the lives of more than 10 million citizens is causing political, security and social turmoil, and constitutes the main obstacle standing in the way of realizing the deep-seated desire to promote human rights.
- Yemen has suffered a precipitous decline in its economic situation and is increasingly vulnerable in the face of the revolt of the Houthi militia against legitimacy and its attacks against the Yemeni people, who are among the populations most in need of aid to meet daily requirements and confront the humanitarian crisis. Yemen, in fact, requires a redoubling of international aid if it is to meet minimum relief requirements, as well as financing for production initiatives to help reduce the need for aid in the future.
- Yemen is particularly concerned to protect and promote children believing, as it does, in the need to lay the foundations for future development and well-being. In this connection, the Government considers that the recruitment of children and their exploitation in conflict by the Houthi militia constitutes the most formidable obstacle to future progress, and asks that this issue be placed at the top of the agenda of the international community.
- The danger posed by mines, widely planted by the Houthi militia in the regions it controlled, represent one of the most serious violations to the right to life in the areas liberated by the legitimate Government. This is an area in which the Government requires more international support, in various forms.
- Priority is being given to adopting and implementing sustainable solutions for displaced persons, especially adequate shelter in areas under government control. The Government's efforts in this regard require the support of the international community if it is to achieve its goal that no part of society be left behind.

XIII. Undertakings

120. In accordance with recommendations made by the national committee for the universal periodic review, and with the approval of the Council of Ministers, Yemen makes the following pledges for the period 2024–2028:

- The Government will work with parliament to complete procedures for the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
 - The governmental technical committee on human rights will, as planned, finalize and submit periodic reports to human rights treaty bodies by the end of 2025.
 - Efforts to protect civilians will continue thanks to effective cooperation mechanisms with relevant United Nations and international bodies.
 - Work will continue to develop mechanisms to provide relief to beneficiaries and to meet minimum needs, via effective cooperation with United Nations bodies and institutions, and relevant international organizations.
 - A bill for the establishment of an independent national human rights institution will be endorsed and submitted by early 2025, following discussions on this matter at the seventy-sixth Human Rights Day.
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