

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE FOUR ARBITRARILY DETAINED BAHÁ'IS

On 21 June 2024, the Huthi de facto authorities released Baha'i human rights activist Abdullah al-Olofi from over a year in arbitrary detention, yet are continuing to arbitrarily detain four other Baha'is. According to credible sources, the Huthis forced Abdullah al-Olofi to sign a pledge that he would refrain from engaging in any Bahá'í related activities. On 25 May 2023, armed Huthi forces stormed a peaceful gathering of Baha'is in a private residence in Sana'a and arbitrarily detained 17 people, including five women. They forcibly disappeared them for around four months until their families learned they were being held at Huthi-run security and intelligence detention centres in Sana'a. Between June 2023 and June 2024, 13 individuals including Abdullah al-Olofi and all five women were released following international pressure. The four remaining Bahai's are held without charge and denied their right to legal counsel.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Spokesperson for the Huthi de facto authorities

Mohamed Abdelsalam

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Dear Mohamed Abdelsalam,

While I welcome the release of human rights activist, Abdullah al-Olofi – although he should have never been detained in the first place – I am extremely concerned about the remaining four detained Bahai individuals **Abdul'elah Muhammad al-Boni, 30, Hassan Tariq Thabet al-Zakari, 28, Muhammad Bashir Abdel Jalil, 25, and Ibrahim Ahmad Jo'eil, 49, and I demand their immediate and unconditional release.**

On 25 May 2023, Huthi armed forces stormed a peaceful gathering of the Baha'is in a private residence in Sana'a and arbitrarily detained 17 people, including five women. They forcibly disappeared them for around four months until their families learned they were being held at Huthi-run security and intelligence centres in Sana'a. Between June 2023 and June 2024, 13 individuals, including all five women, were released following international pressure. The remaining four detainees are held without charge and denied their right to legal counsel.

According to credible sources, the Huthis conditioned the release of all 13 Baha'is upon securing a guarantor and the payment of a "commercial guarantee". In addition, some of those released, including Abdullah al-Olofi, were forced to sign pledges that they will refrain from engaging in Baha'i related activities or they will denounce their religion in a flagrant violation of their right to freedom of religion and belief.

I am also concerned that the remaining Baha'i individuals in custody are at risk of further violations, including torture and other-ill treatment. Amnesty International has documented the cases of dozens of journalists, human rights defenders, activists, academics, members of the Baha'i religious minority and others perceived as opponents or critics of the Huthis who were subjected to arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment and unfair trials with recourse to the death penalty by the Huthi de facto authorities. All were targeted for peacefully exercising their human rights including their rights to freedom of expression, association and belief.

I therefore call on the Huthi de facto authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all four Baha'i detainees in their custody. I also call on the authorities to end all forms of discrimination and persecution of the Baha'i minority and all others who are targeted solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights including to freedom of religion and belief.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On several occasions, public officials have [incited violence](#) and discrimination against the Baha'is in public speeches. Weeks before the arbitrary detention of the 17 Baha'is, Abdel Malek al-Huthi, the leader of the Huthis, renewed in a speech his attacks against religious minorities, including the Baha'is, accusing them of conspiring to destroy Islam. On 2 June 2023, the Huthi-affiliated Grand Mufti in Sana'a attacked the Baha'is in Yemen in his Friday sermon, accusing them of seeking to harm the country and inciting violence against them.

Since 2015, Amnesty International has [documented](#) the cases of at least 100 members of the Baha'i faith in Yemen, who have been detained by the Huthi de facto authorities and subjected to enforced disappearance, incommunicado detention, torture and ill-treatment and denied fair trial rights.

In August 2016, the Huthi authorities [stormed](#) a peaceful Baha'i youth community event in Sana'a and arbitrarily arrested 65 people, including 14 women and six children.

In September 2018, 24 Baha'is [faced](#) trumped up charges, including espionage for foreign states, in flagrantly unfair proceedings. Earlier that year, in January 2018, the Huthi authorities sentenced the 52-year-old Baha'i prisoner of conscience Hamid Haydara to death for allegedly collaborating with Israel and forging official documents. This sentence came after Hamid Haydara had been detained since December 2013 in flawed proceedings on bogus charges, unfair trial and with credibly allegations that he was tortured and ill-treated.

The Baha'is were also persecuted on account of their faith [prior to the current armed conflict](#) under the rule of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English.
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 11 January 2025.
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Abdul'elah Muhammad al-Boni, Hassan Tariq Thabet Al-Zakari, Muhammad Bashir Abdel Jalil, Ibrahim Ahmad Jo'eil (all he/his/him).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/7826/2024/en/>.