



**International
Federation
of Journalists**

JIM BOUMELHA
President

Beth Costa
General Secretary

Mr. Abdul-Malik al-Houthi
Leader of Ansar Allah Movement
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Concern: Stop Incitement and Oppression against Journalists

Dear Sir,

We are writing on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's largest journalist organisation representing over 600,000 members in 139 countries, to raise our gravest concerns over the media safety in Yemen.

The IFJ defends the rights of journalists and promotes their interests worldwide. To this end, we constantly monitor the situation of journalists with a view to denouncing any violations of journalists' rights and press freedom anywhere and by whomever.

Since the start of the year, we noted the drastic deterioration of the safety of journalists in Yemen. Our concerns have been confirmed by the broadcasting of a video message in Almasirah TV last 19 September in which you described journalists and intellectuals as "traitors" who are "more dangerous to the country than the mercenary fighters", adding that "something must be done to face them". We consider this statement as a direct incitement to Ansar Allah movement's followers to kill critical reporters in Yemen and we therefore demand you to give clear orders not to target journalists.

Moreover, the IFJ's affiliate, the Yemeni Journalist's Syndicate (YJS), informed about numerous practices of torture and other inhuman treatment of up to nine journalists who are held in custody by your group, without charges. We understand that these journalists, who have been arbitrarily arrested and kept incommunicado for over three months in so-called 'revolution prisons', are subjected to violence and torture. The IFJ takes these reports seriously and holds your group responsible for any harm that comes to the journalists in your custody.

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We wish to remind you that, in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 1738 (2006) and 2222 (2015) on the protection of journalists, parties involved in situations of armed conflict are urged "to respect the professional independence and rights of journalists and media professionals".

Furthermore, international law includes a considerable body of legal provisions on the protection of journalists, both as civilians and as members of a specific group of professionals. Moreover, under international human rights law, the right to life and fair trial as well as freedom from torture are inalienable guarantees to which our colleagues are entitled.

We are therefore urging you to personally intervene and clearly instruct forces under your command to cease immediately all attacks against journalists, set free all those who are currently detained and end the incitement against them.

We are also requesting the UN Secretary General to bring the full UN authority and the powerful array of legal tools at their disposal as well as the UN diplomatic clout to help address the serious risks to the life and physical safety the Yemeni journalists and media professionals are facing.

Yours Sincerely

Jim Boumelha

IFJ President

CC: The Special Representative of UN Secretary General for Yemen