

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Yemen: Amnesty International condemns killing of civilians

Amnesty International unreservedly condemns yesterday's suicide attack that killed nine civilians at a tourist site in Ma'rib, north-eastern Yemen.

Seven Spanish tourists and two Yemeni civilians were killed when a bomber reportedly exploded a car near the temple of the Queen of Sheba. A number of other civilians were also said to have been injured. According to press reports, the Yemeni government blamed al-Qa'ida for the attack. Amnesty International has no information as to who is responsible for the attack, but stresses that deliberate killing of civilians is a serious violation of international law regardless of who the perpetrator is.

Amnesty International calls for those responsible for planning this crime to be brought to justice in accordance with international standards.

Background:

Amnesty International has called on armed groups in Yemen to uphold international law and standards which prohibit the targeting of civilians.

It has also raised serious concerns about the Yemeni government's pursuit of the so-called "war on terror", which has been conducted with disturbing disregard for the rule of law and international human rights standards and resulted in multiple human rights violations.

In October 2006, Fawaz Yahya al-Rabi'ee and Mohamed al-Dailami, who escaped in February 2006 from the Political Security prison in Sana'a, were killed when Yemeni security forces reportedly fired at two locations in which the men were hiding. It appeared that the security forces made little or no effort to apprehend the two men or to offer them an opportunity to surrender.