

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALISTS DETAINED PAST SENTENCE EXPIRY

Journalists Mohammed al-Salahi and Mohammed al-Junaid continue to be detained by the Huthi de facto authorities in Hodeidah, Yemen, despite the expiry of their sentences on 20 June 2022 and 13 July 2022 respectively. Since their arrest in 2018, the journalists were subjected to a series of gross human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment such as severe beatings, and denial of access to their lawyer. Amnesty International urges the Huthi de facto authorities to release Mohammed al-Salahi and Mohammed al-Junaid immediately. Pending their release, they must be protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

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

Ansurallah Spokesperson

Mohamed Abdelsalam

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Dear Mohamed Abdelsalam,

I am alarmed to learn that journalists **Mohammed al-Junaid** and **Mohammed al-Salahi** continue to be detained in the Security and Intelligence Services detention centre in Hodeidah, Yemen, despite the expiry of their prison sentence in June and July 2022.

Mohammed al-Salahi and Mohammed al-Junaid were arbitrarily detained by the Huthi Security and Intelligence forces in Hodeidah in October and November 2018 respectively. Mohammed al-Salahi was enforcedly disappeared for five months from the beginning of his arrest. According to his lawyer, he was subjected to severe beatings during interrogations and was suspended from the ceiling in handcuffs while security forces beat him on his testicles. The interrogations lasted over the period of two months and were conducted on a daily basis for five to six hours per day. Mohammed al-Salahi was blindfolded and forced to sign a confessional statement written by the security forces. Despite denying before the prosecutor the confessions he made under torture; the prosecutor failed to investigate claims of torture and did not dismiss confessions extracted under duress.

On 18 December 2018, the Specialized Criminal Prosecution in Hodeidah charged Mohammed al-Junaid and Mohammed al-Salahi with "communicating with people working for the interest of the enemy" and "exchanging information on military sites." On 28 June 2022, the court sentenced Mohammed al-Salahi and Mohammed al-Junaid to three years and eight months in prison in a secret trial on charges relating to spying and aiding the "Saudi and Emirati aggression". They should have been released on 20 June 2022 and 13 July 2022 respectively, but they are kept in custody despite having already served time in pre-trial detention.

Throughout Mohammed al-Salahi and Mohammed al-Junaid's detention, their lawyer was only allowed to meet them once in November 2019 and to attend their prosecution session in Sana'a, the capital, on 18 December 2019.

I call on the Huthi de facto authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Mohammed al-Junaid and Mohammed al-Salahi. Pending their overdue release, the authorities must ensure the journalists are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and carry out a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into Mohammed al-Salahi's claims of torture, with those found responsible brought to justice in fair trials.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All parties to the conflict, including Huthi forces, the Yemeni government, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)-led coalition and UAE-backed Yemeni forces have carried out arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance,, torture and other ill-treatment, and unfair trials.

Over the past eight years, Amnesty International [documented](#) the cases of at least 75 journalists, human rights defenders, academics and others perceived as opponents or critics who were subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, and unfair trials with recourse to the death penalty by the Huthi de facto authorities. All 75 were targeted because of their work as journalists or for peacefully exercising their human rights including their rights to freedom of expression, association, and belief.

In January 2022, the Huthi de facto authorities [raided](#) at least six radio stations in Sana'a and shut them down. The owner of Sawt al-Yemen radio station appealed against the closure before the Journalism and Publishing Court in Sana'a and obtained a court order in July in favour of reopening the station. On 11 July, however, security forces raided and shut down the station against and confiscated its broadcasting devices.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, conditions in Huthi-run prisons and detention centres, including mass overcrowding of detention cells, inadequate access to health care, sufficient food, clean water and sanitation, caused Covid-19 to spread, exposing detainees to substantial health risks. All parties failed to take measures to protect detainees and curb the spread of the virus in prisons and detention centres through the provision of masks or other hygiene products.

The internationally recognized government of Yemen has also harassed, threatened, and arbitrarily detained journalists, human rights defenders and other activists. In 2022, Amnesty International [documented](#) the cases of three journalists prosecuted by the judicial authorities of the internationally recognized government of Yemen in Taiz and Hadramout for publishing content critical of officials and public institutions.

Previously, UAE forces and their Yemeni-government allied armed groups in southern Yemen have been responsible for [arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances](#). In May 2018, Amnesty International detailed the cases of 51 men held in a network of secret prisons by UAE and Yemeni forces operating outside the command of Yemen's government, including individuals detained between March 2016 and May 2018.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic/English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 11 July 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mohammed al-Salahi, Mohammed al-Junaid (both he/his)