

In The Interest Of Justice For Yemeni Journalists:

A Policy Paper on Integrating Media Issues into Transitional Justice Processes



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into Transitional Justice Processes**

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About us:

The Media Freedoms Observatory in Yemen, affiliated with the Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC), is the first platform dedicated to monitoring violations and advocating for journalists' issues in Yemen. It publishes information related to media freedoms and supports journalists' causes both locally and internationally.

The Observatory produces monthly and periodic reports that provide a comprehensive view of the media landscape in Yemen, aiming to contribute to a safe media environment and to reduce impunity. Additionally, it offers integrated emergency services for all male and female journalists and media professionals through a team of experts and specialists.

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The SPARK program aims to empower local communities and civil society organizations to better understand, apply, and develop mechanisms of transitional justice. It seeks to enhance inclusive community participation in Yemen's transitional justice process, recognizing it as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable national peace.

The program operates in close coordination with the Justice 4 Yemen Pact (J4YP), a coalition of ten (10) Yemeni civil society organizations advocating for justice, accountability, and peacebuilding for victims of human rights violations across Yemen. Within this framework, SPARK partners and J4YP members engage local communities and political stakeholders in reconciliation and restorative justice initiatives, aiming to strengthen their capacities to participate effectively in transitional justice processes.

About DT Institute

DT Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to "doing development differently." It implements complex global development programs in conflict, fragile, and closed environments. It also funds thought leadership initiatives that drive innovation and improve lives through evidence-based programming.

Executive Summary

Since the outbreak of war in Yemen at the end of September 2014, Yemeni journalists have found themselves at the heart of one of the country's most complex humanitarian and human rights crises. They have shifted from being witnesses to events to becoming direct targets of grave violations. The war has led to an unprecedented deterioration of the media landscape: 165 media outlets ceased operations, with only about 200 remaining active.¹

Most media institutions have fallen under the control of warring parties, 23 out of 26 TV channels, 42 out of 60 radio stations, 132 newspapers, and 118 out of 147 news websites, according to a study by the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate.²

According to the Marsadak (Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory), a total of 2,629 violations of media freedoms were documented between 2015 and June 2025.³ These included 54 cases of killings, attributed to:

- The Houthi group: 24 cases
- The Saudi-led Military Coalition

airstrikes: 15 cases

- Unknown gunmen: 14 cases
- Al-Qaeda group: 1 case

The killings took various forms, including direct assassinations, explosive devices, and home attacks. Additionally, 532 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention were documented, with the Houthi group responsible for 419 cases.

These violations have displaced more than 400 journalists,⁴ while 13 journalists were sentenced to death, five later released, and eight still facing in absentia sentences. This reality has entrenched a culture of impunity, amid weak legislative and legal structures that were supposed to protect Yemeni male and female journalists.

Based on this reality, this paper proposes integrating journalists' issues as a core component of the four pillars of transitional justice:

- **Truth-Seeking:** Establish independent committees to

(1) Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, Study on the Ownership and Independence of Media Outlets in Yemen, May 2023. <https://shorturl.at/LkadY>

(2) Ibid.

(3) Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory, Report on Media Freedom Violations in Yemen – First Half of 2025, July 21, 2025. [https://marsadak.org/biannual-2025\(Arabic Source\)](https://marsadak.org/biannual-2025(Arabic%20Source)) (English version of Arabic source: <https://marsadak.org/en/in-half-a-year2025/>)

(4) Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC), Yemeni Journalists: Three Years of Displacement and Exile, May 8, 2018. <https://economicmedia.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Yemeni-Journalist-mapping-Arabic.pdf> (Arabic Version) <http://economicmedia.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Yemeni-Journalists-mapping-English.pdf> (English version of Arabic source)

investigate violations against journalists, ensuring their involvement as key actors in uncovering, documenting, and disseminating the truth. Initiatives to preserve memory, such as digital archives or memorial museums, should also be promoted.

- **Justice and Accountability:** Ensure comprehensive, independent investigations, and hold perpetrators accountable both nationally and internationally when local justice mechanisms fail.
- **Reparation:** Design comprehensive compensation programs that include financial support, psychological and social rehabilitation, and restoring the dignity of victims.
- **Guarantees of non-recurrence:** Reform legislative and judicial systems in line with international standards, abolish prison sentences for press-related offenses, and reform the security and media sectors to ensure their independence.

The paper concludes with key recommendations as follows:

- **To Yemeni Authorities:** Immediately release all arbitrarily detained journalists, reveal the fate of those forcibly disappeared, and amend press and publication laws to align with international standards.
- **To Civil Society and the Media:** Create a unified database on violations, expand legal and psychological support for victims, and build alliances with human rights organizations to bring cases before international judicial bodies.
- **To the International Community and INGOS:** Exert pressure on all parties to end violations, support the establishment of international investigative mechanisms, impose sanctions on perpetrators of serious abuses against journalists, support independent media, and adopt urgent protection mechanisms for at-risk journalists.

The paper also concludes that ensuring justice for journalists is not merely a moral or human rights obligation, but a fundamental prerequisite for the success of any transitional justice process and for building a just and sustainable peace in Yemen.

Introduction

Transitional justice serves as a crucial framework for addressing the legacy of gross human rights violations in contexts of conflict or authoritarian rule. Its ultimate goal is to achieve lasting peace and ensure that such abuses are never repeated. In Yemen, where war has persisted since 2014, the need for transitional justice has become more urgent than ever, particularly given the complex humanitarian and human rights crisis left in the wake of the conflict.

Within this context, the role of the media and journalists is pivotal. They are not merely narrators of events but essential actors in documenting violations, uncovering truths, and shaping public awareness. However, in Yemen, journalists have shifted from being observers of the conflict to direct victims of systematic violations. Moreover, media outlets have been instrumentalized as tools of propaganda and warfare serving the agendas of conflicting parties.

This tragic reality, marked by near-total impunity, underscores that integrating journalists' issues into the transitional justice process is not optional, rather it is an indispensable requirement for achieving a just and sustainable peace. The ultimate aim of transitional justice goes beyond legal measures; it seeks to dismantle narratives that have dehumanized victims and replace them with inclusive national narratives. To achieve this, genuine partnership with journalists and media professionals is essential, as they represent the most influential link to society and represent one of the most vital guarantees for the success of truth-seeking, reconciliation, and peace-building processes.

This policy paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the situation of journalists and media outlets in Yemen, focusing on the violations they have endured and assessing existing legal frameworks. It also draws upon comparative international experiences to extract relevant lessons. Based on academic studies, reports, and expert insights, the paper offers practical recommendations centered on integrating journalists' issues into the four pillars of transitional justice: truth-seeking, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence.

Methodology

This paper adopts a qualitative approach that combines desk research and primary sources.

On one hand, desk research involved a thorough review of literature and studies related to media freedoms in Yemen, including reports by local and international human rights organizations, academic research, and journalistic analyses on transitional justice and comparative international experiences. It also drew upon the Marsadak's database, which documents violations committed against Yemeni journalists during the war, and specialized reports on transitional justice to provide a comparative analytical framework.

On the other hand, direct qualitative sources were employed to enrich the paper's content, including:

- A virtual symposium organized by the Marsadak titled, Crimes Against Journalists in Yemen: Prospects for Transitional Justice and Reparation, which gathered over 80 participants, including male and female journalists (some formerly detained), human rights defenders, and representatives of local civil society and international organizations. The symposium addressed key themes such as the state of the media in Yemen, violations against journalists, and the role of transitional justice in achieving redress. It also included first-hand testimonies from journalists who survived detention and enforced disappearance, as well as comparative insights from Tunisia and Syria on integrating journalists' issues into transitional justice pathways.
- In-depth interviews with a Yemeni journalist who was detained for five years and subjected to psychological and physical torture, and with a representative of the Marsadak (Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory).

By combining documentary analysis with first-hand qualitative data, this paper develops a more comprehensive and realistic understanding that balances documented evidence with lived experiences, thereby strengthening the credibility of its findings and proposed recommendations.

The Impact Of The War On The Media And Journalists

Since the outbreak of war in September 2014, following the Houthi takeover of the capital, Sana'a, Yemen's media landscape has entered one of its darkest periods. Media freedoms have drastically declined, and journalists as well as media institutions have become direct targets of all warring parties. Yemen ranks 154th out of 180 countries in the 2024 ⁵ World Press Freedom Index⁵, making it one of the most dangerous environments for journalists amid fragmentation and the existence of multiple authorities.

5- Reporters Without Borders, World Press Freedom Index 2024, <https://rsf.org/ar/%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%81?year=2024> (Arabic Source) (English version of Arabic source: <https://rsf.org/en/index>)

1- The Impact of the War on Media Outlets

A 2023 survey by the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate revealed that the war has had devastating effects on Yemeni media outlets, particularly in terms of independence, funding, and journalists' rights. The report noted that 165 media outlets ceased operations entirely, while only 200 remain active.

For instance, out of 132 newspapers and magazines, only 13 continue publishing, while 119 have stopped. 4 out of 26 TV channels have halted broadcasting (13 of which now operate from abroad), and 6 local radio stations have gone off-air out of 60. Additionally, 33 news websites have shut down, as Houthi authorities have blocked the majority of online news websites inside Yemen.⁶

Many media outlets in Yemen that previously enjoyed a limited degree of freedom before 2014 have since become propaganda tools for warring parties, serving political and military

agendas. This shift has severely undermined press freedom and eroded social cohesion.

Studies indicate that Yemen's media system has become a highly polarized landscape, designed to dominate public discourse and control the information space.⁷ Statistics show that 23 of 26 TV channels, 42 of 60 radio stations, 100 of 132 print publications, and 118 of 147 news websites are now controlled by parties to the conflict.⁸

Another study published by the Journal of Media Studies found that digital media in Yemen has become a central weapon used by warring parties to shape narratives and manipulate public perception. Techniques include news framing, coordinated digital campaigns, echo chambers, filter bubbles, and psychological warfare – all contributing to systematic propaganda, deepening polarization, and fueling social divisions⁹.

6- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, Study on the Ownership and Independence of Media in Yemen, previous reference

7- Abdullah Bakhsh, "Yemeni Media and Representations of the Model of Polarization and Domination of Public Discourse," Al Jazeera Journal of Communication and Media Studies, Al Jazeera Center for Studies, 1 January 2024, <https://aljazeeraajournal.aljazeera.net/article/%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D9%88%D9%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AA/>

8- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, Study on the Ownership and Independence of Media in Yemen, previous reference

9- Ayman Omar, "Digital Media and Its Impact on Shaping Conflict Discourse in the Yemeni Context: An Analytical Study of Mechanisms and Effects," Journal of Media Studies, Volume 7, Issue 31, May 2025, pp. 53-71, Arab Democratic Center, <https://shorturl.at/UIOdJ>

2- Violations Against Journalists

Yemen is considered one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. Systematic violations have been committed with the aim of silencing voices and obstructing truth-seeking. These practices have created a climate of fear and intimidation, forcing many journalists to stop working, flee the country, or operate under extreme risk.

The war has displaced over 400 Yemeni journalists in the largest wave of displacement in the country's history. Sana'a, under Houthi control, is the most repressive area, forcing out 86% of journalists, 70% of whom fled abroad and 30% of which were displaced internally.¹⁰

Between January 2015 and June 2025, Marsadak (Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory) documented 2,629 violations of media freedoms, including 2,312 violations against journalists and 317 against media institutions, with the Houthis responsible for the vast majority¹¹ In 2024 alone, 98 violations were recorded.¹²

Violations committed against journalists over the past decade include:

a. Killings

The killing of journalists represents one of the gravest violations. Marsadak documented 54 cases¹³ of journalists and media workers killed, including two women. Responsibility was distributed among the Houthis group (24 cases), Saudi-Led Military Coalition airstrikes (15), unknown gunmen (14), and Al-Qaeda group (1).

Beyond the numbers, the nature of these killings is alarming, methods included planting explosive devices in vehicles and direct assassinations. Such attacks have fostered a pervasive climate of fear and self-censorship across the media community.

b. Arbitrary Arrest and Detention

Arbitrary arrest and detention are among the most frequent violations with 532 documented cases. The Houthis top the list with 419 cases, followed by the IRG of Yemen its allies with 113 cases. These detentions are often carried out without legal basis or fair trial guarantees.

10- Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC). Yemeni Journalists: 3 Years of Displacement and Forced Migration. Previous reference.

11- Marsadak. Report on Violations of Media Freedoms in Yemen for the First Half of 2025. Previous reference.

12- Marsadak. Annual Media Freedoms Report 2024. March 19, 2025. <https://marsadak.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/annualreport-ar-24-1.pdf> (Arabic Source) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://marsadak.org/en/annualreport-en-24/>)

13- Report on Violations of Media Freedoms in Yemen for the First Half of 2025. Previous reference.

c. Enforced Disappearance

Enforced disappearance is among the most severe violations journalists have faced in recent years. Detainees are held in undisclosed locations, denied contact with their families or lawyers. Most arbitrary detentions are preceded by periods of enforced disappearance, except for journalist Wahid al-Sufi, whose fate has remained unknown since his disappearance in April 2015.¹⁴

Media coverage of enforced disappearance cases is notably scarce. Investigations focusing on victims and their families are largely absent; reporting tends to rely on NGO statements, which contributes to silencing victims and weakening public pressure for accountability, thereby entrenching impunity.¹⁵

Documenting these cases is also fraught with difficulty, especially in Houthi-controlled areas where information is deliberately obscured. Lawyers are often denied access to case files or investigation sessions. Families of disappeared journalists face direct threats if they speak pub-

licly, endangering detainees who may face harsher torture or denial of visits. This occurred with journalist Akram al-Walidi, who was beaten in front of his family in a humiliating manner.¹⁶

d. Torture and Ill-Treatment

Detained journalists have been subjected to both physical and psychological torture, leading to the deterioration of their physical and mental health. The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen documented that journalists detained, particularly those held in Sana'a by the Houthi group, were subjected to severe violations, including torture, ill-treatment, and deprivation of medical care. They were also held in overcrowded, dark, or cold cells, which caused long-term health problems.

The report confirmed that these abuses were linked to a 2015 speech by Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, the Houthis' leader, which directly incited hostility toward journalists and contributed to escalating violence against them inside prisons. It also noted that the trials of several journalists lacked the

14- Previous reference.

15- Ghabar, Bassam. "So That No One Is Forgotten and Perpetrators Go Unpunished: An Urgent Task for Yemeni Journalists – Toward Media Strategies to Highlight Victims of Enforced Disappearance and Strengthen Accountability." Working Paper, (OHCHR), August 30, 2025.

16- Kamel, Khalil. Interview by writer. Officer of Monitoring and Documentation, Marsadak, September 25, 2025.

basic guarantees of a fair trial – their lawyers were denied access to case files or the ability to communicate privately with them. According to the UN Panel,¹⁷ these practices constitute systematic repression of journalists and a flagrant violation of freedom of expression, limiting their ability to expose abuses and contribute to the protection of civilians.

The testimony of the four journalists who were previously sentenced to death and later released in a prisoner exchange, Abdulkhaleq Amran, Akram al-Walidi, Harith Hamid, and Tawfiq al-Mansouri, further confirms the scale of these violations. They recounted horrific details of physical and psychological torture, including beatings, electric shocks, starvation, and denial of medical treatment. They were also held in cramped, filthy cells and threatened with the arrest of their families or use as human shields. They stated that the effects of these practices continue to haunt them even after their release, and they identified the names of Houthi leaders who directly supervised their torture.¹⁸

Similarly, the testimony of Journalist

Mohammed Al-Salahi, shared during an online webinar, organized by Marsadak, on crimes against journalists in Yemen, provides another stark example of this systematic pattern of torture. He was arrested in 2018 from his media workplace in Hodeidah by armed men affiliated with the Houthi group, blindfolded, and taken to what is known as “al-Madafin Prison.” From the very first night, he was subjected to psychological and physical torture and denied contact with his family.

For over five years, al-Salahi was transferred among seven prisons, including the Political Security Prison in Sana’a, the old Shumlan Prison, and Hanish Prison in Hodeidah, where he documented continuous suffering from cold, hunger, overcrowding, and denial of medical care. In his testimony, he stated that journalists were treated more harshly than other detainees, facing deliberate medical neglect, solitary confinement, and psychological warfare, along with sham trials that lacked the most basic standards of justice. Although he was later released, he continues to suffer from the effects of torture and medical neglect to this day.¹⁹

17- United Nations, Panel of Experts on Yemen. “Letter dated 22 January 2021 to the President of the Security Council,” Document S/2021/79. Security Council, January 22, 2021. <https://docs.un.org/ar/S/2021/79> (Arabic source) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2021/79>)

18- Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC). Slow Death Cells [Documentary Film]. July 1, 2024. https://youtu.be/68jN05ABb1Y?si=CbKbuAeBnv_VKn1w

19- Al-Salahi, Muhammad. “Crimes Against Journalists in Yemen: Prospects for Transitional Justice and Reparations.” Digital webinar, Marsadak – SEMC, August 14, 2025.

e. Threats and Incitement

Journalists constantly face threats and incitement from all warring parties, forcing many to stop working or leave the country. The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate documented 223 cases of threats and incitement campaigns against journalists (men and women) over the past decade.²⁰

f. Unfair Trials

Journalists are frequently prosecuted under fabricated charges such as spreading false news, weakening public morale, disturbing public order, or insulting public officials.²¹ Trials often occur before specialized criminal courts designed for terrorism cases in violation of fair trial standards.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate recorded 175 cases of prosecution and interrogation of journalists between 2015 and April 2025.²² Houthi-controlled courts have issued death sentences against 13 journalists, including five former detainees who were later released in prisoner exchanges after eight years of detention. Eight others were sentenced to death in absentia.²³

g. Field Coverage Challenges and Self-Censorship

The fragmentation of authority and the spread of armed groups have made field reporting extremely dangerous. As a result, journalists practice self-censorship to avoid targeting, undermining journalistic quality and the free flow of information.²⁴

h. Women Journalists: Double the Challenges

Yemeni female journalists face complex and compounded challenges that go beyond those experienced by their male counterparts. These challenges are rooted in deep-seated social constraints and traditional family roles that hinder their professional work, such as the requirement to travel with a male guardian (mahram) or obtain prior permission from a male relative. Such restrictions significantly limit their mobility and ability to perform journalistic duties.

These difficulties have been exacerbated by the war, which has led to job losses, displacement, and exposure

20- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. Report on the Status of Press Freedoms in Yemen during Ten Years of War, May 3, 2025. <https://www.yemenjns.net/%D8%B9%D9%82%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%86%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AB%D9%82/>

21- Unpublished document. Judgment issued against nine journalists (Abdulkhaleq Imran, Tawfig Al-Mansouri, Harith Humaid, Akram Al-Walidi, Hisham Tarmum, Hisham Al-Yousfi, Haitham Abdulrahman, Issam Balghith, Hassan Anab). Obtained by the researcher.

22- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. Report on the Status of Press Freedoms during Ten Years of War. Reference previously cited.

23- Monitoring Unit, Marsadak. 2025.

24- Al-Maqatari, Raghdah. "Journalism and Transitional Justice in Yemen." In Crimes Against Journalists in Yemen: Prospects for Transitional Justice and Reparations, digital seminar. Media Freedoms Observatory – SEMC, August 14, 2025.

to risks of arrest, harassment, and assassination, forcing many women to abandon the profession altogether. The new political and security conditions have further restricted their personal and professional freedoms, as well as their ability to write and express themselves freely and safely. Many have received direct threats to stop writing.

Studies conducted by the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate indicate that 89% of female journalists have been directly affected by the war, 86.4% have experienced gender-based violence, 72.7% refrain from expressing their opinions on social media due to fear of threats, and 27.3% reported being subjected to online blackmail.²⁵

These figures highlight the fragility of legal and social protection mechanisms and underscore that journalism, for women in Yemen, remains a profession fraught with heightened risks and compounded pressures.

i. Legislative and Legal Challenges

Media-related laws in Yemen remain outdated, offering insufficient protection for press and digital freedoms and failing to criminalize hate

speech or incitement.²⁶ Most legal frameworks date back to 1994 and 2000 and have not been updated to reflect the digital era.

The weak judiciary and vague legal provisions have allowed the criminalization of dissent under broad terms such as “harm to public interest” or “incitement of hatred.” According to a 2025 study by the National Organization of Yemeni Reporters (SADA), these legal gaps, combined with political interference, have entrenched impunity and undermined guarantees for freedom of expression.²⁷

j. Procedural Barriers to Legal Defense

One journalist testified: “During my trial, I had no access to my lawyer or even to my case file. After my release, there was no legal mechanism to hold my torturers accountable or recover my confiscated property. I completely lost faith in the judicial system.”²⁸

According to Lawyer Abdul Majeed Sabra, the main procedural obstacles to legal defense occur in three stages:²⁹

25- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. Yemeni Female Journalists Most Affected by War and Conflict. May 4, 2025. <https://www.yemenjs.net/الصحيقيات-الاكثر-تأثرا-بالحرب-والصراع/>

26- Al-Maqtari, Raghdha. Reference previously cited.

27- Abdel-Waasi, Nabil. Freedom of Expression and Journalism in Yemen: Legislative Gaps and Judicial Weakness. Sada Organization, 2025.

28- Al-Salahi, Muhammad. Personal interview regarding experience of detention and post-release needs, September 28, 2025. Former journalist detained for five years in Houthi prisons.

29- Sabra, Abdul Majid. “Legislative Challenges Related to Providing Legal Protection for Journalists in Yemen.” Digital seminar. Studies and Economic Media Center, October 1, 2022.

■ Investigation Stage (Preliminary Inquiry):

Security agencies often prevent lawyers from attending interrogations, meeting with detained journalists, or obtaining legal authorization from them. They also engage in enforced disappearance, refuse to refer journalists to the Public Prosecution within the legal timeframe, and ignore prosecutorial directives or judicial release orders. In many cases, these agencies also refuse to transfer detainees to official correctional facilities after their cases are referred.

■ Prosecution Stage:

The Public Prosecution frequently demonstrates bias, rejecting defense requests for release or access to case files, and overlooking serious violations committed by law enforcement officers. In some instances, journalists are treated as if they are guilty and must prove their innocence, contrary to the principles of due process and presumption of innocence.

■ Trial Stage:

Challenges at this stage include lack of judicial impartiality, rejection of legitimate legal defenses, and collusion with security agencies to keep journalists in detention. Lawyers are often denied the right to meet their clients or obtain full copies of case files, severely undermining the effectiveness of the legal defense provided to detained journalists.

k. Impunity

The phenomenon of impunity is the most prominent characteristic of violations against journalists' rights in Yemen, as perpetrators have largely not been brought to justice, encouraging repetition of abuses and undermining the rule of law. Of 54 cases of journalists' killings, perpetrators of 52 cases remain unaccountable, while only two cases reached the courts without resulting in prosecution or accountability³⁰.

The assassination of Journalist Mohammed Abdu Al-Absi, a pioneer in

30- Joint Statement by More than 50 Organizations on the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, November 2, 2023, <https://marsadak.org/dayofendcrimesstatement-ar/> (Arabic Source) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://marsadak.org/en/7795-2/>)

investigative journalism in Yemen, exemplifies this phenomenon. He paid with his life for his courageous investigations into corruption in the oil and energy sectors, documenting the involvement of influential Houthi-linked networks in fuel trading. Despite clear circumstances and medical evidence confirming he was poisoned in Sana'a in December 2016, the investigation was deliberately misled by the de facto authorities in Sana'a, which promoted the narrative of a "natural death." The case file was kept in police and prosecution offices for years without progress, ultimately being closed on the grounds of "insufficient evidence." Six years later, it disappeared entirely from prosecution records.³¹

Similarly, the case of independent journalist, Muqdad Mohammed Majli, illustrates another pattern of impunity. Majli was killed on 17 January 2016 by an airstrike carried out by the Saudi-led Military Coalition targeting a civilian site (Hammam Jarf) in Sana'a, while he was covering the aftermath of a previous strike. Despite testimonies confirming the site had no military targets and that the strike constituted a serious violation

of international humanitarian law, the Saudi Coalition issued no comment or apology, nor was the incident included in its joint investigation team's review, leaving the crime unpunished with no accountability for individuals or commanders responsible for the air operations.³²

In addition to these cases, there are dozens of other violations against journalists where perpetrators have gone unpunished. The fragmentation of authority due to conflict, the emergence of multiple actors, and the resulting chaos in the security landscape are major factors hindering justice and accountability for violations against journalists. Furthermore, the weakness or politicization of judicial institutions, which have at times been used as instruments of repression rather than protection, exacerbates the problem. The limited role of the international community in pressuring conflict parties to ensure journalists' protection is another contributing factor, as past experience show that the international community often prioritizes political considerations over humanitarian and human rights concerns, seeking to appease warring parties and avoid addressing human rights violations.³³

31- Center for Free Media. The Black Market Assassins: The Narrative of the Assassination of Yemen's Pioneer Investigative Journalist. Investigative Report, March 19, 2025, [https://free-medias.com/context/report-context/mohammed-al-absi-the-assassins-of-the-black-market/\(Arabic Source\)](https://free-medias.com/context/report-context/mohammed-al-absi-the-assassins-of-the-black-market/(Arabic Source) (English version of the Arabic source: https://free-medias.com/en/context/report-context/mohammed-al-absi-the-assassins-of-the-black-market/)) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://free-medias.com/en/context/report-context/mohammed-al-absi-the-assassins-of-the-black-market/>)

32- Al-Mushahid Net. "How Was Journalist Al-Miqdad Mujalli Killed?" Investigative Report, August 22, 2024, <https://almushahid.net/125398/>.

33- Khalil Kamel, op. cit.

Integrating Journalists' Issues into Transitional Justice Processes in Yemen

The United Nations defines transitional justice as “the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation.”³⁴

Transitional justice is based on four main pillars aimed at addressing past violations and building a more sustainable future:³⁵

1. **Truth-Seeking:** Through fact-finding and investigative commissions that determine the scope and nature of violations.
2. **Criminal Justice:** Ensuring accountability for perpetrators of serious violations through domestic or international prosecutions.
3. **Reparations:** Providing material and moral compensation and rehabilitation services to victims in recognition of the harm they have suffered.

4. **Guarantees of Non-Recurrence:** Implementing institutional and legislative reforms aimed at dismantling the structures that enable violations, preventing their recurrence in the future.

Transitional justice is not limited to legal mechanisms; it also seeks to delegitimize narratives that strip individuals of their humanity and allow atrocities to occur and to replace them with inclusive and convincing narratives that lay the foundation for a better future. Achieving this goal requires a genuine and effective partnership with media professionals, as they are best positioned to reach the public and influence the formation of public opinion. Without close cooperation with media outlets and those who shape public discourse, the desired transformation will be difficult to achieve.³⁶

Journalism during a transitional phase, often referred to as Transi-

34- United Nations. The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies: Report of the Secretary-General. Security Council, August 2004. [\(https://docs.un.org/ar/S/2004/616\(Arabic source\)\)](https://docs.un.org/ar/S/2004/616(Arabic%20source)) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2004/616>)

35- United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Transitional Justice: A Strategic Tool for People, Prevention, and Peace. October 11, 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/guidance-note-secretary-general-transitional-justice-strategic-tool>

36- Institute for Integrated Transitions (IIT). Changing the Narrative: The Role of Communications in Transitional Justice. Zenodo, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10474409>

tional Journalism, plays a central role in post-conflict settings by uncovering truths, advancing accountability and reform processes, ensuring non-repetition of violations, and contributing to the restoration of the social fabric.³⁷

In the Yemeni context, journalists represent a key group within transitional justice processes for several reasons:

■ **Guardians of Truth and Memory:**

Journalists serve as the living memory of society. Without their documentation, facts may be lost, making it difficult to build a unified narrative of events. Addressing their issues ensures the preservation of this memory and facilitates truth-seeking.

■ **Achieving Comprehensive Justice:**

True transitional justice cannot be established without addressing the cases of those most affected and targeted, among them, journalists.

■ **Strengthening the Rule of Law and Combating Impunity:**

This helps restore confidence in the judicial system and establishes a foundation for holding violators accountable.

■ **Supporting National Reconciliation:**

Providing platforms for journalists who were victims to share their stories and experiences fosters a shared understanding of events, an essential step toward reconciliation.

■ **Reforming the Media Sector:**

Integrating journalists' issues offers an opportunity to develop legislation that protects press freedom and enhances the independence of media and professional unions.

Based on the above, integrating journalists' issues into transitional justice processes is not merely a moral obligation but a fundamental prerequisite for the success of the entire process. Journalists are key partners in documenting the truth, contributing to reconciliation, and building sustainable peace. From this perspective, practical proposals can be developed to outline the requirements for integrating journalists' issues within transitional justice pathways.

37- Fadel Abdul Ghani, Executive Director of the Syrian Network for Human Rights. "Crimes Against Journalists in Yemen: Prospects for Transitional Justice and Reparations." Media Freedom Observatory in Yemen, SEMC, Online Seminar, August 14, 2025.

First: Documentation as the Foundation for Any Transitional Justice Process

Systematic documentation of violations represents a cornerstone for any future transitional justice pathway. It preserves the memory of victims, prevents the erasure of abuses, and establishes a database that facilitates the work of truth commissions or future judicial proceedings.

In Yemen, civil society organizations concerned with rights and freedoms, alongside the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, have been documenting violations committed against journalists. This documentation forms the foundation for any future accountability efforts.

To ensure that these efforts serve as a reliable basis for holding perpetrators of media freedom violations accountable, this paper proposes the following actions:

■ Establishing a Unified Database:

A unified database should be developed using international documentation standards to ensure that collected information can serve as admissible legal evidence in the future. This will guarantee that all data are gathered and stored systematically and methodically.

■ **Training Monitoring and Documentation Entities:** Provide capacity-building and training to or-

ganizations and actors engaged in monitoring violations on the skills of documentation and evidence preservation. This ensures that their efforts are not wasted and that the collected data remain accurate and credible.

■ Activating the Role of Investigative Journalism in Documenting Violations:

Investigative journalism is an essential tool for documenting human rights violations, especially those targeting journalists themselves. It goes beyond merely uncovering facts; it exposes atrocities, identifies those responsible, and drives accountability by influencing public opinion and decision-makers.

This role was exemplified by British and American journalists, who documented the Omarska and Trnopolje detention camps in Bosnia and whose reports prompted the UN Security Council to establish a Commission of Experts – an effort that led to the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).³⁸

■ Launching Awareness Campaigns:

Raise awareness about the importance of documenting violations to encourage journalists and their families to report any abuses they face. Such campaigns will help increase reporting and ensure that no case goes unrecorded.

38- Refik Hodzic and David Tolbert, Media and Transitional Justice: A Dream of Symbiosis in a Troubled Relationship, September 2016, International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Briefing-Media-T.J.-2016.pdf>

Second: Engaging Journalists in All Phases of Transitional Justice

It is essential to involve journalists meaningfully at every stage of the transitional justice process to ensure that justice is served and redress is achieved. This engagement should extend across the following key phases:

1. Truth-Seeking

Journalists and media institutions should be actively engaged in the work of any future truth-seeking commission, not only as witnesses and victims but also as key actors in uncovering, documenting, and communicating the truth to the public. Journalists can serve as vital intermediaries between truth commissions and affected communities, helping reach victims beyond the scope of official mechanisms, broadening the scope of investigations, and contributing to the creation of an inclusive national narrative.

Recommended mechanisms in this regard include:

■ **Establishing Truth Commissions:**

Create independent truth commissions with broad mandates to investigate all violations committed against journalists, identify those responsible, and issue recommendations for accountability and reparations. Journalists should be granted meaningful participation within these commissions.

■ **Preserving Memory:** This can be achieved through both cultural and institutional initiatives to document past crimes against journalists and preserve archives related to violations of their rights, ensuring that the collective memory is not erased. Examples include establishing museums, memorials, and digital archives that preserve victims' testimonies and document the trajectory of press freedom in Yemen.

Designating a National Day for Yemeni Journalism would represent an important step toward officially recognizing the crucial role of journalists and ensuring that their sacrifices remain part of the national consciousness.

Lessons can be drawn from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa, which played a pivotal role in uncovering the truth about apartheid-era violations, including those committed against journalists. The TRC provided victims with a platform to share their stories, contributing to the construction of a

shared memory and the advancement of national reconciliation. Victims' groups, civil society, political figures, media outlets, trade unions, academia, artists, and religious leaders all participated, amplifying the impact and resonance of its messages.³⁹

Media coverage was instrumental in transforming the TRC from a government investigation body into a national phenomenon. Television and radio programs humanized testimonies through live coverage, capturing body language, facial expressions, tone, and silence, conveying the emotional and narrative depth of the hearings.

This focus on individual stories helped move public perception from viewing atrocities as mere statistics to recognizing them as lived human experiences.

A remarkable example was the "TRC Special Report" television program, which went beyond conventional news reporting to deliver in-depth analyses and behind-the-scenes stories, attracting nearly 1.2 million weekly viewers. Through this role, journalists and artists became key mediators between the Commission and the public, helping to craft a unified national narrative that fostered reconciliation.⁴⁰

2. Justice and Accountability

It is crucial that the cases of journalists form a central part of any future judicial proceedings, whether at the national or international level.

■ **Judicial Prosecutions:** Comprehensive, independent investigations must be carried out into all crimes committed against journalists, and those involved must be brought to justice. These prosecutions may take place within the national judicial system or, if justice cannot be achieved domestically, through international mechanisms.

In this context, the Rwandan experience offers valuable lessons. Rwanda adopted a diverse model of transitional justice mechanisms, with a strong emphasis on judicial accountability and prosecution of perpetrators. The process began with the establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) by the UN Security Council, which operated until 2015 and tried 82 individuals for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Parallel to this, national criminal courts were set up, supported by extensive international training programs for judges and investigators. Over several years, these

(39) Refik Hodzic and David Tolbert, OP. Cit

(40) Catherine Cole, "Reverberations of Testimony: South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Art and Media," in Clara Ramírez-Barot (ed.), *Transitional Justice, Culture, and Society: Beyond Outreach* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2014), pp. 397–410.

courts prosecuted nearly 10,000 defendants, issuing sentences that included the death penalty in about 10% of the cases.

However, as the number of detainees swelled to over 120,000, overwhelming the formal judicial system, Rwanda turned in 2001 to a community-based justice mechanism known as the Gacaca courts, rooted in local traditions. These popular courts handled approximately two million cases involving around one million defendants over a decade.

Despite criticism regarding due process, the Gacaca model represented an innovative form of community justice that combined reduced sentences in cases of confession with an emphasis on reconciliation and financial restitution. It became one of the most extensive experiments in participatory justice in the world.⁴¹

International experience demonstrates that serious crimes, such as violations against journalists or acts of genocide, do not expire with time, provided that evidence is preserved and investigations are opened. These investigations can form the foundation for justice even decades later.

A notable example is Guatemala, where former dictator José Efraín Ríos Montt was convicted in 2013 of genocide and crimes against humanity, more than three decades after the atrocities occurred, thanks to the persistent efforts of victims and civil society in collecting and submitting evidence to the courts.⁴²

These two experiences underscore that justice can be achieved even after decades, provided there is political will and thorough documentation of violations. Combining formal justice mechanisms with alternative or community-based approaches can offer a practical pathway for advancing transitional justice in Yemen, particularly concerning crimes committed against journalists.

41- Syrian Dialogue Center, Practical Applications of Transitional Justice: Lessons Learned from International Experiences, February 2025, [https://shorturl.at/htxqD\(Arabic source\)](https://shorturl.at/htxqD(Arabic source)) (English Executive Summary of the Arabic source: <https://shorturl.at/Pv3BT>)

42- International Center for Transitional Justice, Conviction of Ríos Montt for Genocide: A Victory for Justice in Guatemala and Everywhere, May 2013, [https://www.ictj.org/ar/node/17000\(Arabic source\)](https://www.ictj.org/ar/node/17000(Arabic source)) (English version of the Arabic source: <https://www.ictj.org/latest-news/ictj-conviction-r%C3%ADos-montt-genocide-victory-justice-guatemala-and-everywhere>)

3. Reparation

Designing comprehensive reparation programs for journalists requires going beyond financial compensation to include psychological and social rehabilitation, public acknowledgment, and the restoration of reputation for those defamed, as well as support for affected media institutions. Such programs may include:

- **Financial compensation:**

Establishing clear mechanisms to provide fair and proportionate financial compensation to journalists who suffered harm, covering direct financial losses, treatment costs, and loss of income sources.

- **Non-material reparation:**

This involves psychological and social rehabilitation for journalists who were subjected to torture or trauma, and the restoration of dignity for those whose reputations were tarnished or whose careers were damaged by violations.

“Reparation cannot be purely financial. True, monetary compensation is important to rebuild

lives, but what matters most is public acknowledgment and restoring our dignity before society. As journalists, we were defamed and portrayed as spies or agents of discord. I believe reintegration support programs are essential, whether through new job opportunities or professional and psychological training to help us return to normal life.”⁴³

In this regard, international experiences show that full and meaningful reparation is indispensable. The Tunisian experience, for instance, revealed significant shortcomings: victims did not receive complete financial, psychological, or symbolic compensation, nor did the state issue an official apology.⁴⁴

This lack of comprehensive reparation weakened the overall transitional justice process. Therefore, any transitional justice initiative in Yemen must ensure effective reparation mechanisms for journalists, including financial compensation, psychological support, public acknowledgment, and formal apology, to guarantee redress for victims and prevent future impunity.

(43) Mohammed Al-Salahi, journalist and former detainee in Houthi prisons for five years, personal interview on the experience of detention and post-release needs, September 28, 2025.

(44) Amira Mohammed, Vice President of the General Federation of Arab Journalists in Tunisia, on the Tunisian experience of integrating journalists' issues into transitional justice processes, Crimes Against Journalists in Yemen: Prospects for Transitional Justice and Reparation, Marsadak affiliated with the SEMC, virtual seminar, August 14, 2025.

Beyond Tunisia, other countries also offer valuable lessons. Chile, for example, established the National Corporation for Reparation and Reconciliation under Law No. 19.123 of 1992, implementing a comprehensive program that combined financial compensation and healthcare for survivors, with total compensation exceeding \$3.2 billion.

Argentina adopted a gradual approach: beginning in 1991 by compensating some former prisoners under international legal pressure, then expanding in 1994 to include families of the disappeared, and later in 2004 to cover those forced into exile. The Argentine model also prioritized preserving national memory through multiple means, such as building memorials and museums, converting former detention centers into remembrance sites, and supporting civil society initiatives like the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo movement, which kept the issue of kidnapped children alive through regular vigils and artistic projects such as Theatre for Identity.⁴⁵

These combined experiences demonstrate that comprehensive reparations – financial, medical, symbolic, and memorial – are essential for achieving justice and ensuring non-recurrence of violations. This les-

son should be taken seriously in any Yemeni transitional justice process, especially concerning journalists and the media sector.

4. Guarantees of non-recurrence

A free and independent press is itself one of the strongest guarantees against the recurrence of violations. This phase of transitional justice aims to prevent future crimes against journalists through institutional reform, the strengthening of the rule of law, and the empowerment of civil society.

In Yemen's context, this can be achieved through the following measures:

1. Reforming legal and constitutional institutions, which includes:

■ **Reforming the legislative framework:** Yemeni laws, including the Press and Publications Law, are outdated and inconsistent with international standards of freedom of expression. These laws must be reformed to abolish prison sentences in media-related cases and expand legal protection to include digital journalism.

The Tunisian experience shows that legislative and institutional reforms cannot achieve their goals unless they are fully implemented and

(45) Syrian Dialogue Center, op. cit.

transformed into binding, sustainable laws. Following the revolution, Tunisia enacted Decrees 115 and 116, which established a legal framework for press freedom and the public's right to access information and created an independent authority to regulate the audiovisual media sector.

However, these reforms remained incomplete, the decrees were not translated into binding legislation, and independent bodies faced political interference, ultimately undermining press freedom.⁴⁶

Yemen can draw from this lesson by ensuring that its legislative and institutional reforms are comprehensive, enforceable, and insulated from political manipulation, thereby guaranteeing media independence and long-term journalist protection.

■ **Judicial reform:** The judiciary must function as an instrument of protection, not repression. Achieving this requires ensuring full judicial independence from the executive branch, appointing competent and impartial judges, and separating investigative and prosecutorial powers. Mechanisms must also be in place to hold judges accountable when they engage in practices that violate impartiality and justice.⁴⁷

■ **Security sector reform:** This involves cleansing security agencies of individuals implicated in violations, revising laws regulating their work, and training personnel on human rights and press freedom principles, ensuring that their role is to protect, not persecute, journalists.

Yemen can also benefit from Poland's experience in institutional lustration policies aimed at preventing the recurrence of abuses through administrative and judicial reform. In 1993, Poland passed the Verification Law to assess public officials' links to the former repressive secret police, granting judicial appeal rights for final decisions. Although the law proved divisive and was later ruled unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court, a subsequent 1998 law targeted prosecutors, resulting in the dismissal of around 10% of those found complicit in past violations.

This experience underscores that institutional cleansing, when conducted fairly and transparently, can foster independent and trustworthy institutions, rebuild public confidence, and serve as a vital lesson for Yemen in any future reform process.⁴⁸

46- Ameerah Mohammed, previous reference.

47- Tawfiq Al-Shaabi, "Activating Legal Frameworks and Accountability to Reduce Impunity for Crimes Committed Against Journalists," Yemeni Journalists Syndicate in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists and UNESCO, working paper, August 10, 2024.

48- Syrian Dialogue Center, "Practical Applications of Transitional Justice," previously cited reference.

Third: Rebuilding Media Institutions and Strengthening Journalists' Capacities

The paper affirms that transitional justice reforms cannot be complete without rebuilding the media sector itself. The economic fragility of media institutions makes them vulnerable to control; therefore, it is essential to support independent media so that it can effectively fulfill its role. This stage may include:

- **Building a strong and independent media sector:**

By supporting diverse and independent media outlets so that they can act as a true fourth estate, and by ensuring a safe and enabling environment for their operation, free from hate speech or discrimination.

- **Activating the role of digital media in social reconstruction:**

Given the difficulty of rapidly rebuilding traditional media institutions in transitional contexts, digital media plays a crucial role. The Syrian experience demonstrates the necessity of utilizing social media platforms, such as YouTube channels that conducted interviews and discussed violations, thus allowing parts of society, previously isolated from information under regime control, to

learn about the suffering of others. This transformation helped foster shared awareness and contributed to repairing the social fabric.⁴⁹

In Yemen, this role is even more critical, as digital platforms can bridge information gaps between divided regions, bring perspectives closer together, and build collective awareness that reinforces coexistence and reconciliation.

- **Building journalists' capacities:**

Training journalists on professional ethics, safety practices, human rights principles, combating disinformation, and freedom of the press to ensure they can perform their duties effectively and independently.

- **Strengthening civil society:**

Supporting and enhancing the role of civil society organizations in Yemen, particularly those working on journalist protection and human rights. These organizations are essential partners in monitoring violations, advocacy, and providing support to journalists.

49- Fadhl Abdulghani, previous reference.

Conclusions

Based on the above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Violations against journalists are systematic:

They are not isolated incidents but part of an integrated strategy by warring parties to silence independent voices and gain total control over public discourse.

2. The absence of justice has entrenched impunity:

The severe weakness of the legal framework and the paralysis of the judiciary have at times turned the courts into tools of repression rather than protection, perpetuating impunity, and encouraging continued crimes against journalists.

3. Journalists' cases are central to genuine transitional justice:

Comprehensive transitional justice in Yemen cannot be achieved without centrally addressing journalists' cases. Journalists are not merely victims in need of redress; they are vital agents of truth and memory who can construct a unified national narrative.

4. Ignoring media issues threatens Yemen's future:

Continuing to neglect journalists' issues sustains an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship, undermining any effort to build genuine democracy and a knowledge-based, free-expression society in the post-conflict phase.

Recommendations

The paper offers a set of recommendations directed toward various stakeholders to ensure journalists' protection, combat impunity, and integrate media issues into any future transitional justice process in Yemen.

First: Recommendations to Government Authorities

- Review legislation:

Amend press and publication laws to align with international standards, abolish vague provisions used to suppress free expression, and clearly criminalize hate speech.

- Ensure judicial independence:

Take concrete steps to guarantee the judiciary's impartiality and autonomy, and train judges and investigators to handle journalists' cases professionally and fairly.

- Activate the role of the public prosecution:

Ensure that prosecutors carry out their duties in investigating crimes against journalists and bringing perpetrators to justice.

- Establish a specialized, independent judicial mechanism to investigate and prosecute crimes committed against

journalists and media professionals and integrate it into proposed transitional justice mechanisms.

- Release all arbitrarily detained journalists, disclose the fate of the forcibly disappeared, and issue an official apology for violations committed against journalists.

- Provide legal and security protection for journalists, especially those working in conflict zones or covering sensitive issues.

- Create a safe and supportive environment for independent media, free from politicization and polarization.

- Provide financial and technical assistance to media institutions damaged by the conflict.

Second: Recommendations to Civil Society and the Media

- Establish a unified database:

Develop a comprehensive registry of all cases, including full legal documentation usable in national and international courts.

- Awareness campaigns:

Launch extensive campaigns to encourage journalists and their families to report violations, and

continue advocacy efforts to push for accountability.

- **Comprehensive support:**

Expand legal, psychological, and financial assistance for victimized journalists, including legal representation and rehabilitation services.

- **Capacity building:**

Offer training in safety practices and professional ethics to strengthen journalists' resilience in high-risk environments.

- **Enhance media–civil society partnerships:**

Foster alliances between media outlets, human rights, and humanitarian organizations to exchange information, systematically document cases, and engage journalists in legal and advocacy efforts, both locally and internationally, to bring cases before judicial bodies.

- **Build professional and independent media:**

Restore professionalism in Yemeni journalism while avoiding hate speech, incitement, and polarization.

- **Promote the media's role in peace-building and reconciliation:**

Encourage the production of unifying national narratives that promote truth and justice.

- **Train journalists in investigative re-**

porting, fact-checking, and balanced, objective storytelling.

- **Develop the concept of “transitional journalism”:**

As a post-conflict media framework focused on truth-seeking, accountability, and nation-building.

- **Support independent digital platforms in previously isolated areas to counter disinformation and rebuild social cohesion.**

- **Raise awareness among journalists, communities, and victims about transitional justice mechanisms.**

Third: Recommendations to the International Community and International Organizations

“Protecting journalists is not a luxury, it is essential to safeguarding truth and ensuring that people’s voices remain alive. My personal experience taught me that international silence emboldens violators. What we need from the UN and human rights organizations is genuine commitment to protecting journalists and preventing imprisonment and torture from becoming the normal fate of those who dare to write freely.”⁵⁰

This highlights the urgent need for serious international engagement, which can be translated into the

50- Mohammed Alsalahi, Previous reference

following recommendations:

- Exert pressure on all warring parties in Yemen to cease violations against journalists and comply with international humanitarian and human rights law.
- Support the establishment of independent international mechanisms to investigate crimes against journalists in Yemen and bring perpetrators to justice.
- Impose sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for grave violations against journalists and deny them participation in international forums.
- Provide technical and financial support for transitional justice efforts in Yemen, including truth commissions, reparations mechanisms, and institutional reforms.
- Support local civil society organizations documenting violations and providing legal, psychological, and financial assistance to affected journalists.
- Assist in building the capacity of the Yemeni judiciary to ensure its independence and impartiality, enabling it to protect journalists and hold violators accountable.
- Support comprehensive reparation programs that go beyond financial compensation to include psychological and professional rehabilitation

for journalists and their families.

As one victimized journalist expressed:

“When I was released from prison, I felt I could breathe again, but I soon realized freedom alone wasn’t enough. What I needed most was psychological support; the effects of torture and isolation weighed so heavily that I still struggle to sleep normally. I also urgently needed livelihood support after fleeing my village from Houthi persecution that aimed to send me back to prison. I lost my job and all my work equipment, leaving me struggling to survive.”⁵¹

- Support capacity-building programs for journalists and media institutions in Yemen to strengthen professionalism and independence.
- Provide financial support to independent, non-partisan media platforms to help deliver credible information to the public.
- Continue advocacy for press freedom, and raise international awareness of violations against journalists in Yemen.
- Promote the transition toward “transitional journalism” in Yemen by funding independent media initiatives and training programs for journalists, with an emphasis on using digital technologies to reach all segments of society.

51- Mohammed Alsalahi, Previous reference



The Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC) is a leading Yemeni civil society organization dedicated to promoting economic awareness, transparency, and good governance. It actively encourages citizen participation in decision-making processes and advocates for the development of a professional and responsible media landscape in Yemen.

<https://economicmedia.net/>

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Yemen Media Freedoms Observatory (MARSADAK) is a monitoring and information platform aimed at disseminating all matters relating to freedoms of opinion and expression in various Yemeni regions in a professional and independent manner, as well as, analyzing and advocating for journalists' issues at the local and international levels.

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