



BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Inflammatory speech by the Houthi leader targets Baha'is in Yemen with genocidal intent

SANA'A, YEMEN—On March 23rd, Mr. Abdel-Malek al-Houthi, the leader of the Houthis in Yemen, gave a televised speech that vehemently vilified and denounced the Baha'i Faith, further intensifying the ongoing persecution of the Baha'is in that country.

Within days, over 20 publications in Yemen reiterated his comments about the Baha'is, and a prominent Houthi strategist commented on social media that “we will butcher every Baha'i.” Several political and religious actors associated with the Houthis expressed similar sentiments.

“We find Mr. al-Houthi's comments extremely alarming,” said Mr. Anthony Vance, Director of the Office of Public Affairs for the Baha'is of the United States. “Mr. al-Houthi's comments, taken with those made by Yemeni media and public officials suggest the beginnings of a strategic campaign of incitement to genocide.”

Over the course of his speech, Mr. al-Houthi employed a rhetoric reminiscent of statements made by the Iranian regime against the Baha'is, warning Yemenis of the “satanic” Baha'i “movement” that is “waging a war of doctrine” against Islam.

Indeed, several independent sources have been confirming that Iranian authorities are directing the persecution of the Baha'is in Yemen. Multiple reports further indicate that high-ranking officials in the National Security Bureau are maintaining pressure on the Baha'i community as a result of instructions from Iran despite repeated appeals by prominent Yemenis.

For more information about religious persecution and the rights of the Baha'is in Yemen, please contact the U.S. Baha'i Office of Public Affairs at 202-833-8990, or visit publicaffairs.bahai.us.