



BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Escalated Threat to Baha'is of Yemen

WASHINGTON, D.C.—September 18, 2018 Over 20 members of the Baha'i Faith in Yemen, including all of its national-level leaders, were indicted on September 15 at a court hearing in the country's Houthi-controlled capital, Sana'a. The accusations against the Baha'is include apostasy and espionage. [Amnesty International](#) described the hearing as “flagrantly unfair” and the charges as “trumped up.”

This current wave of persecution is a manifestation of the publicly proclaimed agenda set by Houthi leader Abdel-Malik al-Houthi during a March 23, 2018 broadcast on Yemeni television during which he denounced the Baha'i Faith as “satanic” and stated that it was “waging a war of doctrine” against Islam.

“These charges are unconscionable,” said Anthony Vance, Director of the U.S. Baha'i Office of Public Affairs. “The immediate situation of the Baha'is in Yemen has clearly become ominous and we urge governments and human rights organizations to condemn this serious escalation against a peaceful religious minority.”

The Baha'is and their lawyers were not told about the hearing, and only the judge, prosecutor, and other court officials were present when it began. The same judge, Abdu Ismail Hassan Rajeh, sentenced [Hamed bin Haydara](#), a Yemeni Baha'i who remains in prison, to death in a grossly unfair hearing on January 2, 2018.

“These proceedings are disturbingly similar to those conducted against the Baha'is in Iran in the 1980s,” said Mr. Vance. “The government of Iran systematically rounded up the elected leadership, conducted summary, sham trials, and executed them.”

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.