



SAM
Rights & Liberties

AL-MAHRAH; INVISIBLE VIOLATIONS

A human rights report monitors the human rights situation in the Yemeni
governorate of Al-Mahrah

Geneva - (Jan 2019)





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Introduction about Al-Mahrah

Al-Mahrah governorate is located on the eastern borders of the Republic of Yemen with the Sultanate of Oman, and it is about (1318) km away from the capital, Sanaa. Al-Mahrah area is about (122,500 Km²), and it is the second largest Yemeni governorate in terms of area after its neighbor Hadhramout, Al-Mahrah area is about the size of the Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait, but its population is (0.5%) of the total population of the Republic [1]. Therefore, it is considered the least governorate in terms of the population number which is (88,594) people, according to the results of the general Population, Houses and Facilities Census of 2004, and the population grows annually at (4.51%), and the number of its districts is (9), and the capital is Al-Ghaidha.

Agriculture, animal husbandry, and fishing are among the most important activities that the people of the province practice and live on. The province is located on

a long coastal strip that reaches (500) kilometers on the Arabian Sea, which is open to the Indian Ocean and rich in fish and marine organisms. Al-Mahrah land is rich with natural resources and a variety of economic potentials. Initial findings indicate the availability of some minerals, mainly; are gold, marble, granite, and black sand. Al-Mahrah governorate is known for its frankincense trees and incense industry, and viable commercial activity, being the main route of Yemen's trade with some Arab Gulf countries. Nashtoun port is active in commercial activity in fishing and exporting fish. One of its tourism attractions is the Houf Nature Reserve. The topography of the governorate is predominantly plain and desert, with a hot climate in summer and mild in winter. Al-Mahrah is connected to the desert of the Empty Quarter from the north, Hadhramout governorate to the west, the Arabian Sea to the south, and the Sultanate of Oman to the east.

Why this report?

The conflict in Al-Mahrah province which is far from the fighting areas in Yemen, became at the forefront of media and political scene, after the militarization of the province by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which led the people of the province opposed to the militarization of the province to come out in demonstrations and sit-ins expressing their rejection; in some cases, civilians were exposed to violations coercive measures by the Saudi forces and the local authority loyal to them alike, such as murder, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and dismissal from public office, violations that contradict the Yemeni constitution and international treaties, which prompted SAM to shed Highlight on the invisible violations that occur in Al-Mahrah governorate, to put an end to such practices and hold those responsible to account.

Report Methodology

The report is based on the findings of a field visit by the report team to Al-Mahrah governorate during February 2019, where it has interviewed 25 activists, including leaders of the protest movement who organized peaceful sit-ins against the Saudi military manifestation in the province, and documented many testimonies on the incidents of repression and violations of human rights, the field team concluded into a clear picture of the human rights situation in the province in light of developments taking place, especially with regard to the militarization of the province far from the armed conflict in the country.

The report provides a legal framework, a brief definition of the governorate and a historical background about it, before delving into the details of the human rights situation there, whether related to basic rights or violations of civil and political rights, and Saudi policies that undermine the rule of law and constitute a violation of national sovereignty and cause harm to the social peace that Known in this governorate, which is far from the conflict and war that the country is witnessing, focusing on the effects of the Saudi military presence in the province.

Legal Framework:

International covenants and treaties emphasize the protection and preservation of human rights, freedoms and dignity, and in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article (1) (all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights), and the United Nations Charter affirms in Article (1) on (Maintaining international peace and security) and Article (2) (all members of the UN refrain from threatening to use force or using it against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country or in any other way).

International covenants are keen to embody human values and pays great concern for the principle of the territorial integrity of states, and for coexistence that guarantees human diversity and respects the will and sovereignty of man on his land without hegemony, guardianship, aggression or blatant interference based on force and the practice of terrorism.

Since the partnership between the Yemeni legitimate government and the Arab Coalition, and the partnership between it and the United Nations, is based on the basic references represented by (the GCC Initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 2216), hence, without this legitimacy, the Coalition would not have been established or the UNSC resolutions issued.

Therefore, the establishment of the Coalition and the issuance of UN resolutions was aimed at protecting and restoring legitimate government, and all references emphasized on the unity of the Republic of Yemen and its territorial integrity, and Yemeni legitimate government, is the only one entitled to decide whether it needs or not the Coalition, or invalidated the UN resolutions, being the principal party, expressing the will of the people, materialized on February 21, 2012, and it also determines the limits of the intervention of the Coalition countries and thus the extent and legitimacy of such intervention, and whether it falls within the limits set forth

according to the request made by the President of the Republic to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, or it exceeds the limits of the request into other forms of interventions for purposes other than those stated, namely the restoration of legitimate government.

The reference to UN Resolution 2216 was built on a fundamental concept; that is to restore legitimate government and end the coup, in a country which is under Chapter VII according to resolution 2140, which allows the military intervention, and based on that, Yemen was under Chapter VII, which requires restoring legitimacy by force, in case that peaceful means failed. And any failure to observe these references is a violation of the rules of international law, and harmful to the principle of territorial integrity of states.

Such violation is evident in Al-Mahrah and Socotra governorates by the Coalition as represented by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which brought about an unprecedented military manifestation on the two peaceful, and stable provinces without respecting the good neighboring and treaties that ensure non-interference in the affairs of others, and emphasizes on mutual respect between countries, in a way that materialize coexistence, common interests and respect for rights and freedoms and the sovereignty of man over his land.

Brief background

The people in Al-Mahrah and Socotra are known for their civilized human behavior and historical legacy, which reflects unity and diversity at the same time with noble values, representing the values of truth, goodness and beauty. In addition to the common Arabic, the Mahri people speak a local language rooted back to the Himyarite civilization, about three thousand years ago.

The remote governorate suffers from an economic recession, exacerbated with the disruption of the development process due to the war and the Houthis militia's control of the Yemeni capital, Sana'a. the United Arab Emirates intentionally continuing to disrupt the government's activities in the interim capital, Aden.

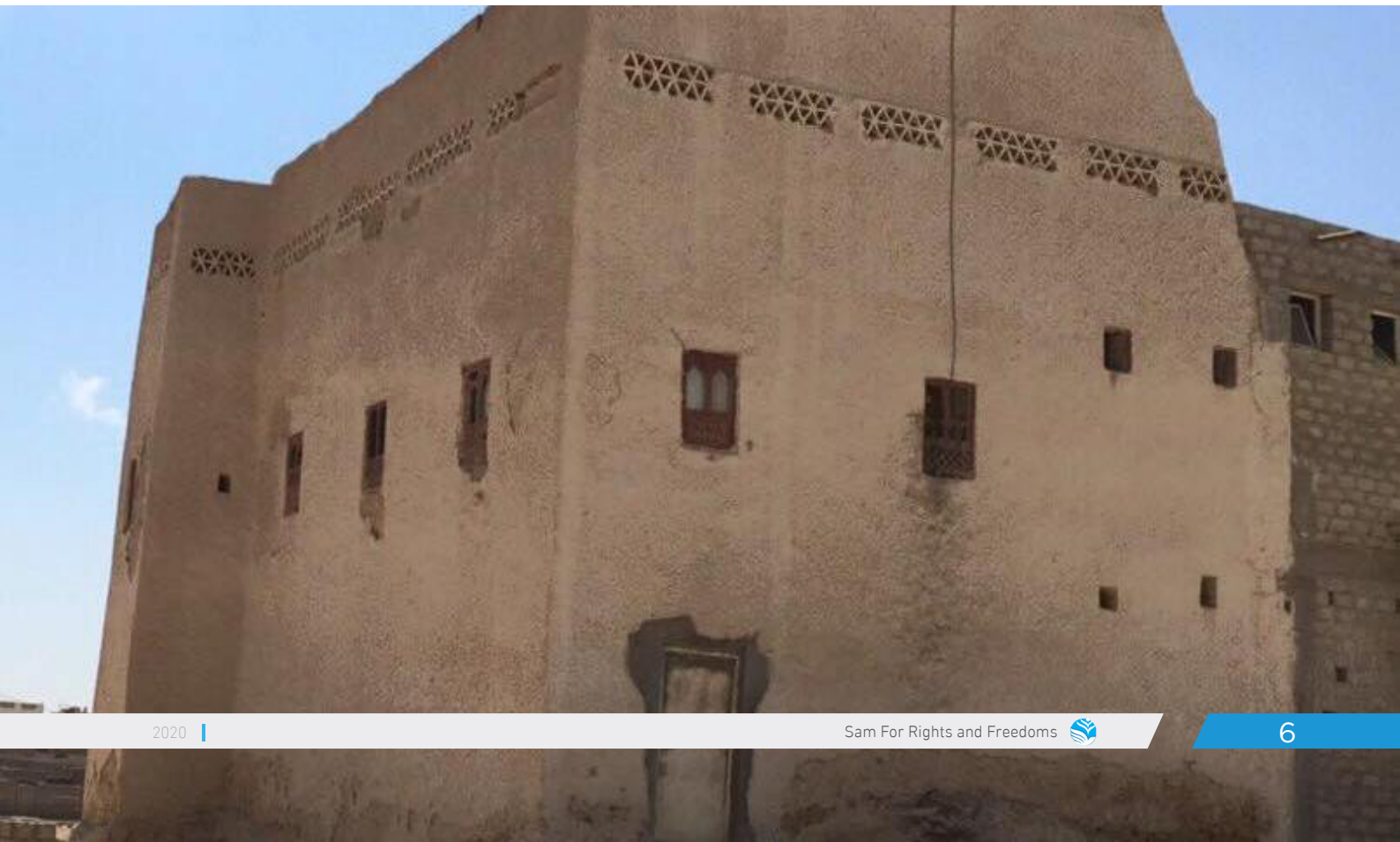
Al-Mahrah governorate received tens of thousands of IDPs, who escape the inferno of war in the conflict areas, but most of them turned into a workforce for the host Mahri community, and contributed significantly to the commercial activity, but nevertheless, the field research team observed that large numbers of IDPs could not find job opportunities, in the absence of governmental or non-governmental initiatives to accommodate these unemployed IDPs, many of whom turned to beggars, not to mention the large number of fishermen being affected and deprived of practicing the profession of fishing by militarization of fishing areas and restricting their movements by Saudi forces.

The former governor Bakadda tried to organize an investment conference, and important steps were taken for that, where the local authority in Al-Mahrah worked in preparations for a whole year, and brochures on investment opportunities were prepared, and many Yemeni and other companies from the Gulf countries and the world were invited. It was planned that the conference is sponsored by the President of the Republic who promised to attend the opening session, eventually, the conference was scheduled for December 2018, was not organized, and postponed to an unidentified date by the new governor, Rajeh Bakreet.

In November 2017, the first batch of Saudi forces arrived in the city of Al-Ghaidha without coordination with the local authorities, who were intercepted by local gunmen, but they ultimately handed over the airport to the Saudi troops, provided

that they abide by conditions that include pledging to operate Al-Ghaidha airport for civil aviation, not to replace its employees with others, and to coordinate with the local authority regarding any new assistance or developments that may occur at the airport, however the Saudi forces did not adhere to any of these conditions, and turned the airport into a military barracks once they received it.

Al-Mahrah governorate is currently suffering from a Saudi militarization process in violation of international norms and laws and a violation of the national sovereignty and constitutional legitimacy of the Republic of Yemen without any legal or political grounds within the “Decisive Storm - Restore Hope” military operations, which supposed to support legitimacy in the country.



Militarization of the governorate

The Emirati authorities headed towards this province months after the start of the “Decisive Storm - Restore Hope” operations, and used the Emirati Red Crescent as a coverup to expand its influence by purchasing tribal loyalties and attracting political, social and security dignitaries, and established a training camp and form the “Mahri Elite” forces, Before it withdrew later in favor of the Saudi military presence, who replaced the Mahri Elite with the military police forces. Which are different forces than the formal military police forces affiliated with the Ministry of Defense, however, President Hadi issued a decision to appoint a commander for this force, who actually assumed office months before his appointment.

The military operation “Decisive Storm - Restoring Hope” and Security Council

Resolution 2216 do not provide for any justifications for effecting military presence in Al-Mahrah and Socotra, being two remote governorates away from the conflicts and war between the Coalition and Houthis. There is absolutely no justification for the presence of a Saudi-Emirati military presence, nor is there any legal justification for the creation of militias that directly follow in terms of equipment, armament and training the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, no international agreements were concluded between the two countries, Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Despite the senior position of the governor in the local authority, the law does not authorize him to handing over the province to a foreign country, or other illegal practices that we have documented in this report.



Emirati Military Presence

Since the end of the year 2015, and after months of the start of the “Decisive Storm - Restore Hope” operations, the United Arab Emirates has worked to intervene in the province through the Emirati Red Crescent and then began to solicit some of the characters with the exchange of money and cars, targeting people from certain tribes, and followed by unlawful recruitment for young people from those tribes outside the Yemeni defense and interior ministries institutions, in an attempt to establish a military and security apparatus similar to that established in other governorates such as Aden and Abyan. The UAE has created reception and training camps in the Khalidiya camp in the Ramah district, and Al-Ghaidha camp in the eastern axis and the Central Security camp in Al-Ghaidha.

The UAE and its militias have created a large number of military checkpoints in the roads linking the province. The Emiratis used the governorate building as command and control center for their troops, then established their own center inside the police camp.

These Emirati acts and movements were rejected by a broad segment of the governorate’s population and prominent social figures, including the local council, and within a short period of time the Emirati forces withdrew, leaving Saudi forces behind.



The Saudi military presence

People in Al-Mahrah and Socotra fears that there is a hidden economic and political agenda behind the Saudi military presence in these governorates, namely; extending of an oil pipeline through the Al-Mahrah lands to the Arabian Sea and taking advantage of the strategic location of Socotra Island without required agreement between the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Not to mention the direct control of land, sea and air economic outlets, with the aim of threatening the neighboring countries.

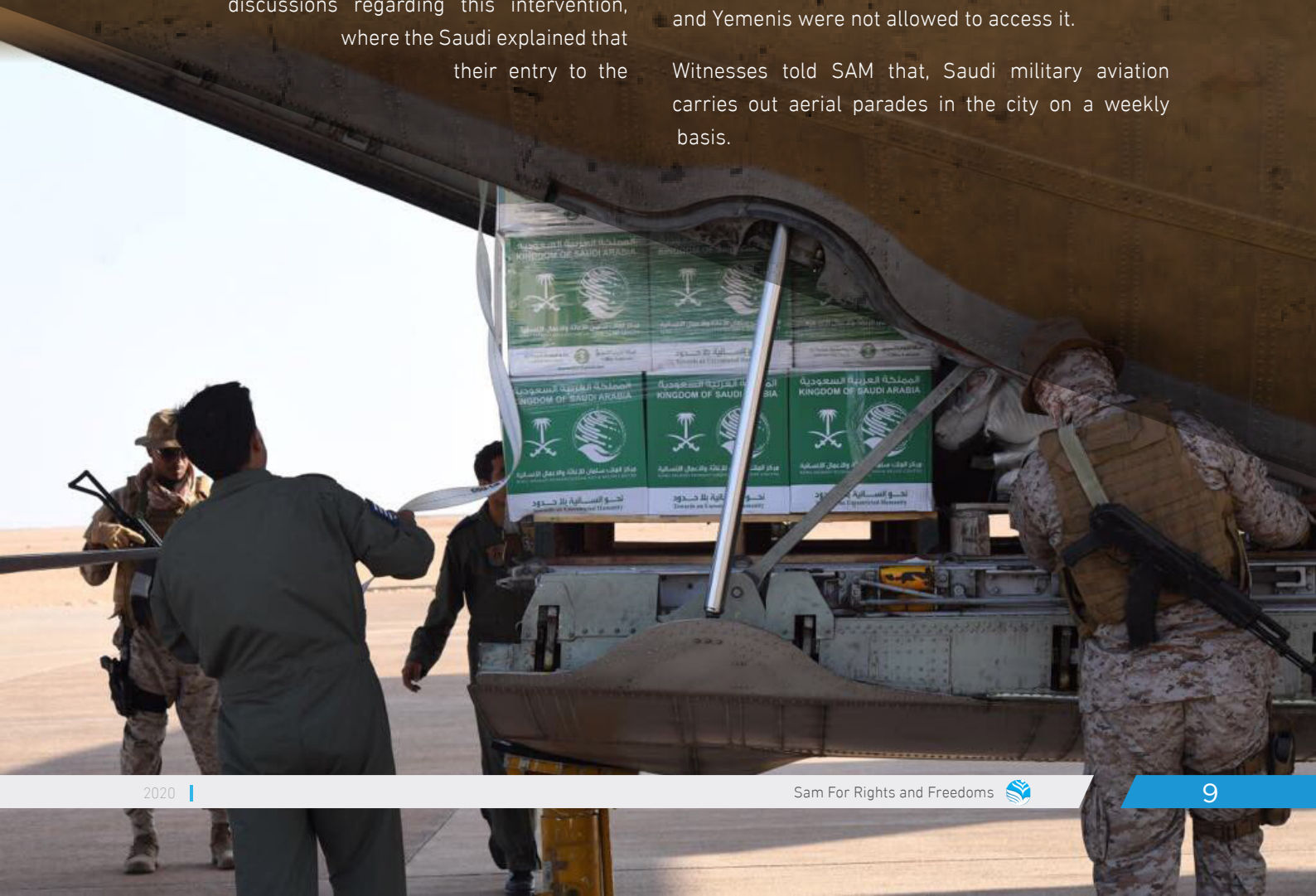
On the 13th of November 2017, people in Al-Mahrah, and the local council authority, were surprised for the arrival of a group of Saudi soldiers from the Al-Rayyan airport in the neighboring Hadramout governorate to Al-Ghaidha airport, which outraged the residents, who strongly protested entry of these forces to the airport and preventing them from accessing it.

The local authority, represented by the governor, Muhammad Abdullah Keda, confirmed that arrival of these Saudi military forces was not in coordination or approved by the authorities, and there were extensive discussions regarding this intervention, where the Saudi explained that their entry to the

governorate is to provide assistance to operate and rehabilitate Al-Ghaidha airport.

On that day, a meeting was held that included notables and social figures with representatives from the Saudi side, who confirmed that its forces are of a humanitarian purpose, and the local authority required them not to use Al-Ghaidha airport as a military base and the administrative, security and military staff of the airport to remain as it is and coordination with the local authority, also using the airport for civil purposes and humanitarian aid only, and restarting civil aviation, and the representatives of the Saudi side agreed to the conditions presented, however, they did not observe any of their commitments, and the airport was turned into a military airport that receives only the Saudi military airplanes to transport military equipment, and vehicles, weapons, and soldiers from Saudi Arabia to Al-Ghaidha airport and since then, Saudi military aircraft, fighters and helicopters continued to use the airport. And the airport was turned into a military base for the Saudi forces, guarded with modern univalence equipment and Yemenis were not allowed to access it.

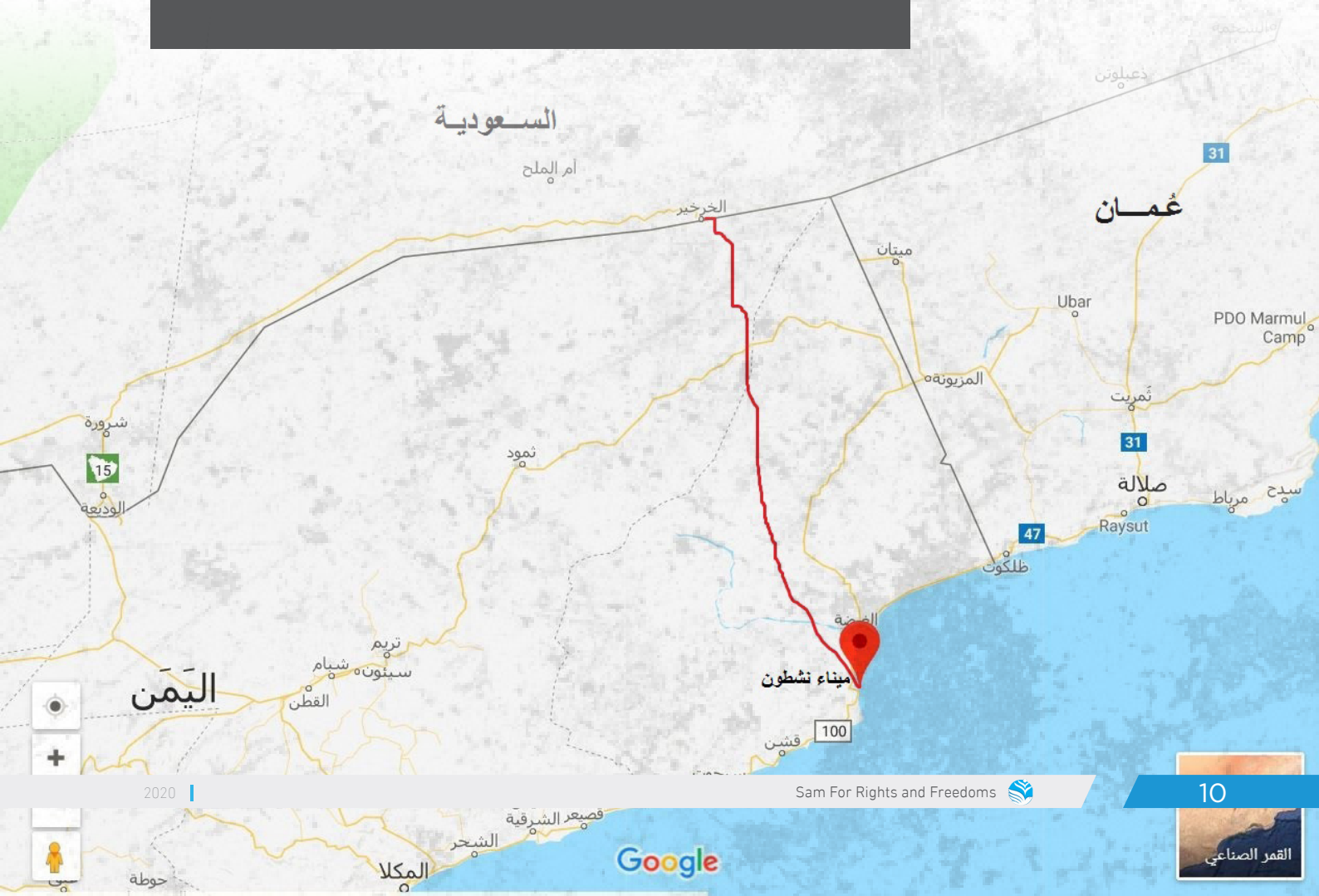
Witnesses told SAM that, Saudi military aviation carries out aerial parades in the city on a weekly basis.



Oil Pipeline Signs

In September 2018, Saudi Arabia set concrete signs in the Yemeni region bordering the Saudi Alkharkhir region, which are marks for defining the path of a Saudi oil pipeline to the Arabian Sea coast through Al Mahrah governorate, which was not approved by Yemen, but the army forces of the 11th Infantry Brigade arrested workers who belonged to a private company and a number of citizens removed these marks in October 2018.

On October 5, 2018, during the visit of the Prime Minister to the governorate following the tropical storm (Laban), the protesters organized a mass festival in Al-Ghaidha and issued a statement rejecting what they described as Saudi and Emirati ambitions. The PM concluded his visit without meeting any of the protestors.



Areas and Camps of the Saudi Forces

The Saudi forces have established military camps and checkpoints in Al-Mahrah governorate, of which SAM has documented 33 sites, including ten sites in Al-Ghaidha district, a large camp in the center of the Hat district, and six locations in the Sehout district, five locations in Al-Messila, five Saudi military locations in Shahan district, including a checkpoint near the 123rd Infantry Brigade Camp, affiliated to the 2nd military zone, four sites in the Husuen district, and two checkpoints in the Man'ar district.





Harassment of Fishermen

On February 23, 2019, the Saudi Forces Command, in Sehout district, issued a number of decisions, included banning fishermen from approaching its military sites on the coasts of the district, and from fishing during evening hours.

On July 6, 2019, a group of Saudi forces soldiers expelled the fishermen from the main landing site in the city of Sehout near the fishermen cooperative, and ordered them to remove their boats and equipment because they are near the vicinity of a new Saudi military site on the seashore, and informed them that the landing site would turn into a private military facility for Saudi forces.

The harassing of fishermen continued, and on the date of July 7, 2019, the Public Security Forces arrested the fisherman Anis Ahmed bin Rabie and a group of his colleagues, in response to instructions made by the director of the district, to arrest them for protesting against turning the main landing site for the fishermen in Sehout to a Saudi military facility.



Fake Terror Cells

On June 4, 2019, media outlets affiliated with Al-Mahrah governor loyal to Saudi Arabia, Rajih Bakreet, reported allegations that “Coalition and military police” forces arrested terrorist elements wanted for justice and affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the city of Al-Ghaidha. “The most dangerous terrorist elements were arrested without resorting to the use of force”, according to the news.

However, this alleged operation did not lead to refer the accused to trial. However, this is not the first allegation, where authorities fail to refer the suspects to the court, which raises concern that terrorism is just used as scare crew for political purposes, to justify the Saudi military presence in the province and to achieve some hidden ambitions.



Tampering with the Social Fabric

In collusion with the local authority, Saudi Arabia pursued to tamper with the social fabric by bringing strict religious Salafi groups to the province, and deploy them to some mosques to impose a religious discourse in line with Saudi policies aimed at undermining the social peace and spreading extremist religious discourse that incite against any civil manifestations in the province, adopts blasphemous discourse against political or social demands, and peaceful protests that refuse to militarize the province and called for the departure of Saudi forces.

Saudi Arabia relies on some militant groups in Yemen as part of influence mechanisms, and established religious centers for Salafi groups in Al-Mahrah, as a step to strengthen its military presence. At the same time, Riyadh is striving to change the political and social map in the province, hence, established another Salafi center in the city of Qeshn. The third largest city in Al-Mahrah governorate, and the city previously witnessed a large number of Salafis arriving, and Al-Mahrah governor Rajeh Bakreet - loyal to Saudi Arabia - held a closed meeting with a Salafi sheikh residing in Mecca, visited the center and distributed food aid provided by Saudi Arabia, before returning to Mecca.

Although these preachers and imams claim that they are not concerned with politics, yet they express extremist views and inciting against peaceful activities or civil and human rights figures on the background of their political stances.

Sit-ins Rejecting the Saudi Military Presence

With the emergence of Saudi intentions to reinforce its military presence in the governorate and the creation of additional military sites, Al-Mahrah people began a series of peaceful protests, sit-ins and peaceful marches.

The first sit-in began on May 9, 2018, in which the goals and demands of the people of the governorate were defined in six points:

1. Resume work in Shahan, and Sirfeet, land terminals, and Nashtoun port, and hand them over to the local security and armed forces as instructed by the president and the vice president of the Republic in the telegram No. 41 of 2017
2. Resume operations in Al Ghaidha International Airport as a civilian airport under the supervision of the local authority in the governorate and handing it over to local security forces.



3. Lifting the restrictions imposed on trade activities, import and export in Shahn and Sirfeet land terminals and Nashtoun port that negatively affected the revenues that the governorate needs to provide basic services and manage the lives of citizens.
4. Integration, where possible, between the local authorities, and the managers of the executive bodies in accordance with the local authority law, to ensure that all efforts are in favor of the province and locals.
5. Giving priority to improving the public services such as electricity, water, health, education, roads, and other services related to people's lives
6. Giving special attention to building the local police institution, in preparation for its future work, within the federal system, in Al-Mahrah and Socotra region.

Since June 25, 2018, some of the Al-Mahrah people started sit-in to protest the presence of the Saudi forces that controlled the main outlets and important facilities in the governorate and militarize them.

On July 14, 2018, President Abdorabo Mansour Hadi, dismissed deputy governor of Al-Mahrah for Desert Affairs, Ali Salem Al-Harizi, two days after he described the Saudi presence in

Al-Ghaidha airport as "occupation." Also, the director of security in the province Major General Ahmed Muhammad Qahtan and appointed him to the Shura Council, and replaced him with Colonel Mufti Suhail Nahyan, who holds Saudi nationality next to his Yemeni nationality.

On the same day, President Hadi appointed Badr Kelshat as deputy governor for Youth Affairs. However, on July 14, 2019, the governor issued an order preventing him from entering the province, and he had suspended him and ordered to interrogate him on February 17, 2019.

On August 1, 2018, President Hadi visited Al-Mahrah governorate, and was received by the Saudi ambassador. Following his visit, he formed a fact-finding committee after the events in the governorate.

On August 3, 2019, two Saudi helicopters fired a number of rockets in the village of Al-Abri, located on the outskirts of Al-Ghaidha city.

The shelling did not result in casualties, but caused fear and panic among the villagers, which is located at the junction of roads linking the city of Al-Ghaidha with the two land terminals of Yemen on the Omani border, whose residents oppose the Saudi military presence.



Violation of the right to life;

Al-Mahrah governorate remained far from the chronic political conflict in Yemen, until the arrival of the Saudi forces in the province. On the date of November 18, 2017, days after the arrival of the Saudi military team, Al-Ghaidha witnessed the first political assassination in its history, targeted Sheikh Mustafa Abdullah Al-Tayeb, where gunmen shot him in Al-Ghaidha market. Al-Tayyib was the imam of a mosque in Shabwa governorate before moving to Al-Mahrah governorate for work, and he is from Abyan.

On May 19, 2018, Salah Muhammad Salih Hassan al-Maisri, a personal guard of governor Bakreet, was killed, and while the official account says he had committed suicide, other accounts say that he was killed after a fight between him and a Saudi officer during the governor's visit to Al-Ghaidha airport after being turned into a Saudi military base. His family questioned the

suicide premise, demanding an official investigation into the incident.

On November 13, 2018, sit-ins were attacked by Saudi forces in Al-Anfaq area, and the shooting resulted in the death of two civilians, Ali Ahmed Ar`arah al-Jaddhi and Nasir Saeed Ahmad Nashwan, and seriously wounded, Salem Samhan al-Jaddhi.

On January 2, 2019, two soldiers, Zaid Muhammad al-Qumaiha and Ammar Muhammad Mufreh, two special forces soldiers, "the former Central Security", were accused of killing the son of a Sheikh loyal to Saudi Arabia, who was traveling in a state-owned car, and sources said that his father, accompanied by Saudi armored vehicles, tried to get him out of the central prison in Al-Ghaidha by force, but its attempt failed.

Violation of the Right to Physical Integrity, and Victims of Torture

Physical integrity is one of the most fundamental rights of the human being, which is a right enshrined in most legislations and constitutions over the period of times. It requires not to cause harm on the human body or to attack its physical and moral entity, under any circumstances, and under any justification. Especially, after the approval of the International Group for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, according to which the physical and moral integrity is considered as a fundamental right for all individuals without exception.

National legislation (the Constitution and Yemeni laws) guarantee all basic rights, the most important of which are the right to life, physical and moral integrity, the right to freedom and freedom of opinion and expression, and international human rights legislation guarantee all the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, the right to development and other rights mentioned in the rest of the international agreements, which Yemen ratified, and the 2001 Yemen constitution confirmed in its sixth article "The state affirms the implementation of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the League of Arab States and the generally recognized rules of international law." This affirmation obliges the authorities in Yemen and Saudi Arabia to respect all citizens' rights without exception and protect them as inherent rights. Consequently, national and international legislation protect all human rights and guarantee exercising of these rights freely, according to what Yemen committed to and ratified with other countries of the world. Nor can war be invoked to overturn

or forfeit any of these fundamental rights.

On June 10, 2019, masked gunmen stormed the home of Younis Saif Saleh Saeed Al-Radfani, 28, and took him to the Saudi Forces Prison at Al-Ghaidha airport, he remained in prison for three days, and said that he was tortured for two continuous days and saw horrific incidents of torture.

On July 2, 2019, a female was shot while a security force raided her house in Al-Nour neighborhood in Al-Ghaidha, and took her to Al Ghaidha hospital, where the security force stormed the house without a court order, and arrested two people, who were released later, and said that they were tortured in a secret Saudi prison.

On July 2, 2019, a house in al-Ghaidha was attacked, and Nasser Mahmoud Mabrouk and Saleh Muhammad Hassan, from the Abyan governorate, said that their house was attacked by the "military police" of the governor and the Saudi forces, and they were taken to a secret prison where they said they were tortured beating and insulted for three days, as their personal belongings, clothes and money were stolen.

Arbitrary imprisonment and enforced disappearance;

Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides the following: (No one may be arbitrarily arrested, detained, or exiled) and Article 5 also provides the following:

(No one may be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) Unfortunately, there are many crimes committed by the Saudi forces against citizens in Al-Mahrah who have been arrested and illegally investigated and subjected to inhumane treatment, beaten, tortured, threatened, and subjected to extortion and other coercion treatment. Some of them were arrested for long periods, others for short periods, and some were also arrested and imprisoned in the Saudi Forces Prison at Al-Ghaidha Airport, and others moved to prisons in Saudi Arabia, and released after a while, and others still in the detention centers. We mention here some of the detainees' names, as we lack sufficient information about the forcibly disappeared and their whereabouts;

- In early May 2018, some Yemeni websites revealed that Ahmed bin Breek Al-Tamimi was arrested by local Yemeni forces, then handed over to the Saudi forces, who deported him to Saudi Arabia, where he was forcibly hidden, however, information received by SAM indicate that he was later released.
- On December 10, 2018, Hazem Mohamed Kidda was arrested, and investigated at the prison of the Saudi forces at Al-Ghaidha airport, and the Saudi forces released him through tribal mediation.
- On March 9, 2019, Saudi forces arrested Muhammad Abdullah Muslim and Ali Saad Bakhit Kidda, at night, they were taken from their tent in the village of Yaroub, 30 km east of Al Ghaidha, and they were taken to Al-Ghaidha Airport which is under Saudi forces control, following spread of a video showing one of their relatives calling for Saudi forces to leave Al-Mahrah land, Ali says: "We were imprisoned and insulted in the airport prison for 15 days, and we were released only after tribal intervening during the visit of the Presidential Committee to Al-Mahrah."
- On September 9, 2019, the pharmacist, Suleiman Al-Amri, was abducted by a military force of Al-Mahrah governor, who raided his shop and tied and blindfolded him, and transferred to a secret prison, where he said he was tortured with electric shocks to lose consciousness, and following tribal mediation they handed him over to the Criminal Investigation Department who released him the next day.
- On July 2, 2019, a Saudi force arrested photojournalist Yahya Al-Sawari while he was being held in the central prison pending prosecution in a criminal case, and was transferred to an unknown location. Al-Sawari remained abducted and disappeared until August 27 when he published a recent photo of him on his Facebook page, He said he was abducted in a Saudi prison. "Throughout the detention I did not know where I was. I was transferred to more than one prison blindfolded with my hands tied to my back." Al-Sawari added, "during investigation, I was subjected to severe psychological and physical torture, electrocution and the threat of killing my little brother Badr." Al-Sawari was working for the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies before his arrest and enforced disappearance in the prisons of the Saudi forces in Al-Mahrah.
- On July 18, 2018, an armed force raided an apartment inhabited by Badr al-Sawari, 25, in Al-Ghaidha, the younger brother of journalist Yahya al-Sawari. The armed forces abducted Badr and transferred him to an unknown location, and disappeared until September 3, 2019, when tribal mediation succeeded in releasing him after a video and written appeal by his brother, Yahya, who offered to surrender in exchange for his brother's release.

Assault on private property

The Fourth Geneva Convention, on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, emphasizes the protection of individuals' property and personal belongings and not destroying or impairing them.

The Constitution of the Republic of Yemen stipulates in Article 20 that "the general confiscation of funds is prohibited, and private confiscation is permitted only by a court ruling."

However, since the Saudi forces took control of the border ports of Yemen with the Sultanate of Oman, they began, in conjunction with the local authority, to implement arbitrary and illegal measures against merchants who use these ports, including;

Increasing of customs and disrupting truck traffic;

In August 2018, the Governor of Al-Mahrah issued a decision to raise customs by one hundred percent on "miscellaneous goods", and the Saudi forces from time to time ban crossing of trucks and move inspection devices, which causes huge losses for traders and citizens who find themselves stuck in the border crossing for days and weeks while waiting to obtain a transit permit, and the Saudi forces had replaced the modern truck inspection device, with a less efficient device, so the number of trucks that the port could examine during the day decreased from sixty to ten trucks only. The decision to raise customs duties

at the port coincided with other decisions to prevent the entry of dozens of goods, products, devices and equipment into the Yemeni lands.

Detaining Trucks Loaded with Solar Power Panels;

In March 2019, Saudi forces detained twenty trucks loaded with solar panels, which had exited the customs of Shahan port officially, and Saudi forces returned them from the Ramah area to Al-Ghaidha airport, which is used as a military base.

Assault on a trade store

On December 3, 2018, the Fartak food store in Al-Ghaidha was attacked by Saudi soldiers from the forces stationed at the airport, and the owner of the shop, Mohammed Khamis Maghfik, said that this incident is the fourth in which his shop is being attacked "The militias of the Saudi airport force are attacking the store, harassing the workers, and insulting them with bad words, forcing them to leave the work in the shop."

Raiding stores of fishermen and tampering with their tools;

On January 3, 2019, the Saudi forces raided the stores of the fishermen in the “Al-Fidmi” area of Al-Ghaidha district and tore down the nets of the fishermen and destroyed their private property, and some believe that the operation was a punishment for the fishermen who expressed their opposition a few days ago to Saudi Arabia’s establishment of a new camp in the coastal areas they depend on for fishing.

Violation of the right to peaceful assembly;

The Yemeni constitution provides for the right of any citizen to express opinion and peaceful assembly. The Yemeni law also guaranteed citizens in all of the Republic of Yemen and political parties, mass organizations and professional unions the freedom to organize peaceful demonstrations and marches.

Since the beginning of the military presence of Saudi Arabia in Al-Mahrah, some citizens have been active in organizing sit-ins and mass activities rejecting Saudi control of their province, based on their basic right to assembly, expression and expression of opinion, which are regulated by the Republican Decree of Law No. 29 of 2003 regarding Organizing Demonstrations and Marches, however, these peaceful activities are subjected to repression and harassment, also to shooting where two protestors were killed, in addition to launching media campaigns that include threats to the protesters, including the publication of a document of arrest warrant against Al-Harizi, the undersecretary of the province, who was dismissed for rejecting the Saudi military presence.

The sit-ins and protestors were attacked and fired at, resulting in the killing of two citizens,

and Saudi helicopters and military planes were flying low over the towns and villages without any reason imposed by the rules of engagement or a military necessity other than terrorizing the citizens.

Violation of the right to freedom of expression and opinion;

International treaties guarantee freedom of opinion and expression, and the Yemeni state is obligated according to a constitutional provision to that effect, even though the constitution has restricted freedom of opinion and expression and referred them to the law on Press and Publications, which is the law that journalists see as restricting freedoms.

Article (42) of the Yemeni constitution states the following: “Every citizen has the right to contribute to political, economic, social and cultural life. The state guarantees freedom of thought and expressing opinions by saying, writing and photographing within the limits of the law.”

However, the practices of the local authority and the Saudi forces in Al-Mahrah intentionally denies this right, as proved by these practices, which were documented by this report:

- On August 23, 2018, the governor instructed the arrest of two activists Mahir Al-Jadhi and Issa Hazhiz, for opposing the Saudi military presence in the province.
- On December 10, 2018, Ms. Nadia Mohamed Kida was threatened, with a message delivered to her through her brother Hazem who was arrested by the Saudi forces at Al-Ghaidha airport. Nadia is active in the sit-ins rejecting the Saudi military presence in the province.

- In October 2018, activists circulated a document of arrest warrant against Al-Harizi, the dismissed deputy governor and the tribal leader, Abboud Heboud Qumsit, for rejecting the Saudi military presence in Al-Mahrah.
- On May 4, 2019, Samih Ali Naseeb was threatened by the director of public security in the governorate. Samih was a member of the National Dialogue Conference and a member of the local council in the Houf district, and he was active in the sit-in committees opposing the Saudi military presence in the governorate, and he was threatened for organizing a sit-in to demand the exit of the Saudi forces from the Houf Nature Reserve.
- On May 23, 2019, the representative of the Al-Ghaidha Primary Prosecution issued a memorandum to the Director of Al-Ghaidha Security requesting that he bring both media activist Ahmed Belhaf and activist Saeed Qahour, based on their accusation by the governor of publishing false news for the purpose of disturbing security, and the memorandum shows that the prosecution is loyal to the governor and is not unrepentant as supposed to be.

Abuse of Public Office;

The national legislation of the Republic of Yemen criminalizes the abuse of public office for any unlawful targets, and the abuse of public authority is considered a form of political corruption.

Law No. (12) of 1994 on Crimes and Penalties, and its amendments, emphasizes on penalties related to job abuse. Al-Mahrah governorate under Saudi Arabia's custodianship over the local authority witnessed a large-scale bulldozing of the public job, through arbitrary dismissal decisions of dozens of public officials, and the appointment of others, on the basis of nepotism, or to punish staff who refused militarizing of the province and violating people's right to social peace and security.

Illegal decisions;

On August 7, 2018, the governor issued a list of goods prohibited from entering Yemen that included dozens of items, including solar panels, motorcycles, some toys, underwater photography lenses, agricultural fertilizers, and other products, some of which may be used for military purposes, but most of the goods prohibited by the governor's decision are not banned by the law, to be prohibited.

On May 2, 2019, Bakreet instructed the general manager of Shahn port prohibiting importing of solar panels systems except with special instructions from the governor, despite the need of the solar energy systems by Yemeni citizens who depend on it due to power outages from the public service grids, in Houthis control areas, in particular, as well as most areas of controlled by the legitimate government.

Illegal appointments;

On November 27, 2017, a Republican Decree No. (70) was issued appointing governor Rajih Bakreet to succeed Muhammad Abdullah Bakadda. Although the new governor has taken the constitutional oath stipulating the commitment to preserve the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Yemen, the documents and certificates obtained by SAM proved that he spared no effort to enable the Saudi forces to control the province, and to use his official powers outside the scope of his job and the powers conferred on him by the law in turn for responsibility and duties towards the state and citizens.

On May 3, 2018, the governor issued a decision appointing his son-in-law, Mohsen Ali Belhaf, as director of the oil company. Belhaf was not an employee of the company before, and he does not hold any specialist certificate in any field that qualifies him for such a post.

On October 10, 2018, the governor issued a decision appointing his uncle Ahmed Salem Bakreet, as director of the Sirfeet border crossing.

Violation of the right to a public office;

Thirty days after his arrival in the governorate, on January 30, 2017, the new governor issued a number of decisions according to which most general directors, deputy general directors and office directors in the governorate were replaced, and he canceled the decisions of the previous governor to appoint advisers to the

governorate, and said on his Facebook page that all former directors who were dismissed will be promoted to deputy ministers, for their efforts in serving the province, but this did not happen.

Two months after their arrival, the Saudi forces arbitrarily dismissed and expelled eleven officers from the Air Force at Al-Ghaidha airport despite their long-term service at the airport, and were transferred to administrative and security posts in other departments of the governorate after turning the airport into a Saudi military barracks.

On July 25, 2019, the director of the Health and Population Bureau at the Directorate of Sehout, Saeed Mubarak Ma'rabi, suspended the salary of the technical officer, Awadh Mohamed Saeed Rabie, due to his media activities on the social media sites that refused Saudi presence in the province.

On July 24, 2018, Bakhit Salam Yeshul, was dismissed from his job as director of the Messila directorate, and Yeshul says that the reason is his refusal to the local authority and the Saudi forces efforts to establish camps for the Saudi forces in the district, and his support for the sit-ins rejecting the Saudi military presence.

In January 2019, Ali Afarar was dismissed from his position as director of the Ministry of Human Rights bureau on the background of the issuance of a human rights report monitoring human rights violations in the governorate.

List of Dismissed General Managers on the basis of Political Loyalty:

No.	Name	Agency and Title
01	Amer Saeed Ali Kelshat	DG of Trade and Industry
02	Rashid Ali Saeed Yeshul	DG of Social Affairs and Labor
03	Alethnen Kaswat bin Yaslem	DG of Water and Environment
04	Hind Salem Arafa	DG of Women Development
05	Salem Muslim Muhammed	DG of Information and Statistics
06	Azan Muhammed Esa Al-Qameri	DG of Relations and Protocol
07	Saad Ali Muslim Al-Qameri	D of Education, Education Bureau
08	Ali Omer Muhammed Al-Ansi	DG of Al-Mahrah Radio
09	Basheer Salem Al-Sulaimi	D of Education, Al-Ghaidha district
10	Ali Salem Sa'dout	DG of Education, Husuen district
11	Ali Salem Ali Qarahaf	DG of Education, Houf district
12	Salem Omer Basalam	DG of Education, Sehout district
13	Muhammed Abubakr Baabbad	DG of Education, Al-Masila district
14	Saad Aati Saeed Al-Qameri	DG of Education, Man'ar district
15	Muslim Ahmed Salem Rifeet	D of Education, Shahn district
16	Bakheet Salam Yeshul	DG of Al-Masila district
17	Saeed Salem Hassan Al-Jadahi	DG of Qashn district
18	Ali Saeed Muhesin Rifeet	DG of Houf district
19	Muhammed Aamir Sadoun	DG of Husuen district
20	Abdullah Abdulmajeed Al-Asad	DG of Mana'r district
21	Salem Ali Saeed Al-Qameri	D of Al-Ghaidha hospital
22	Ahmed Muhammed Afrar	DG of Health Services
23	Hassan Naseeb	DD of Al-Ghaidha hospital
24	Muhammd Saad Musha'gal Al-Sulaimi	Chair of Fisheries Authority
25	Abdullah Suliman Doueel	DG of Oil Company
26	Abdulhakim Ahmed Mubarak Al-Tamimi	Director of Personnel Affairs, Labor Burau
27	Muhsin Karam Baquityan	DG of Labor Burau
28	Thabit Awadh Mubarak	D of Sirfeet Customs
29	Aamir Salem Qumset	DG of Museums and Antiquities
30	Salem Saad Abdullah Al-Zwedi	DG of Lands, Al-Masilah district
31	Faiz Salem Aamer Al-Duhaimi	D of Social Affairs, Al-Masila district
32	Dhawi Haimad Awadh Omrah	D of Health, Al-Masila district
33	Ali Abdullah Afrar	D of Human Rights Burau

General managers quit their jobs

- On December 12, 2018, Brigadier Ali Omar Mawla Al-Duwailah, director of political security in the governorate, resigned from his work in protest of what he described as the failure of the local authorities and the subordination of the governor to Saudi Arabia.
- On June 17, 2019, Muhammad Ali Kelshat, the director general of electricity in the governorate, resigned in protest against the governor's inefficient method in handling electricity problems and supplying generators that do not cover the energy deficit that citizens suffer from every summer." After months of Kelshat's resignation, the media released pictures of generators that they said were generators from Saudi Arabia recently, but they were permanently out of service. Sources said that those Perkins generators were of poor quality and consume large quantities of diesel and produce 400 kilowatts which is much less than supposed capacity, instead of 800 kilowatts each.
- On November 2, 2019, Muhammed Said Belhaf resigned from his work as director of the Education Bureau in Hat District, for many reasons; first; Failure to deal with good faith by the local authority in the governorate regarding office's requests and needs.



Recommendations

Yemeni government;

- Protecting national sovereignty, defending the interests of the Yemeni people, in accordance with its obligations under the constitution of the Republic of Yemen and the laws in force, and ending all manifestations of militarization in the province by the Saudi forces, especially in vital locations linked to the interests of citizens, especially airports, ports and crossings, and taking responsibility for protecting and managing them.
- Expose the Saudi policies in Yemen in general and Al-Mahrah Governorate in particular, and reject before the international community of any prejudice to the principle of territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen.
- To protect human rights in Al-Mahrah, including civil and political rights, and to stop the acts of repression and exclusion that affect activists who reject the Saudi military presence.

Saudi authorities;

- Refrain from the policies of repression, impose of trusteeship on the national decision, and respect the national sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen, in compliance with relevant international covenants and treaties.
- Respecting the bilateral agreements between Yemen and Saudi Arabia on the basis of the principle of good-neighborly, regional safety and ensuring the integrity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen.
- To end all manifestations of controlling of vital locations, evacuating airports, ports and fishing areas in Al-Mahrah, and hand them over immediately to the competent government authorities.
- Held parties responsible for human rights violations into accountability, and ensure financial and moral reparation for the victims.

(1) the National Information Center,
<http://www.yemen-nic.info/gover/almahraa/brife/>

(2) The International Declaration on Increasing the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations, which was adopted and publicly published by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 42/22 of 18 December 1987,
<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/arab/b201.html>

(3) The Declaration on the Deepening and Strengthening of the International Détente, which was adopted and made public in accordance with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 32/155 of 19 December 1977, http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/arabic/Deepening_Consolidation.html

4) The Post site, collective dismissals, support for the militia, neglect of sovereignty, and the disruption of official institutions, Rajeh Bakreet; two years of enabling Saudi Arabia in Al-Mahrah and establishing a province with a special pattern, <https://almawqeaqpost.net/news/39162>



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AL-MAHRAH; INVISIBLE VIOLATIONS

A human rights report monitors the human rights situation in the Yemeni governorate of Al-Mahrah

