



SAM
Rights & Liberties

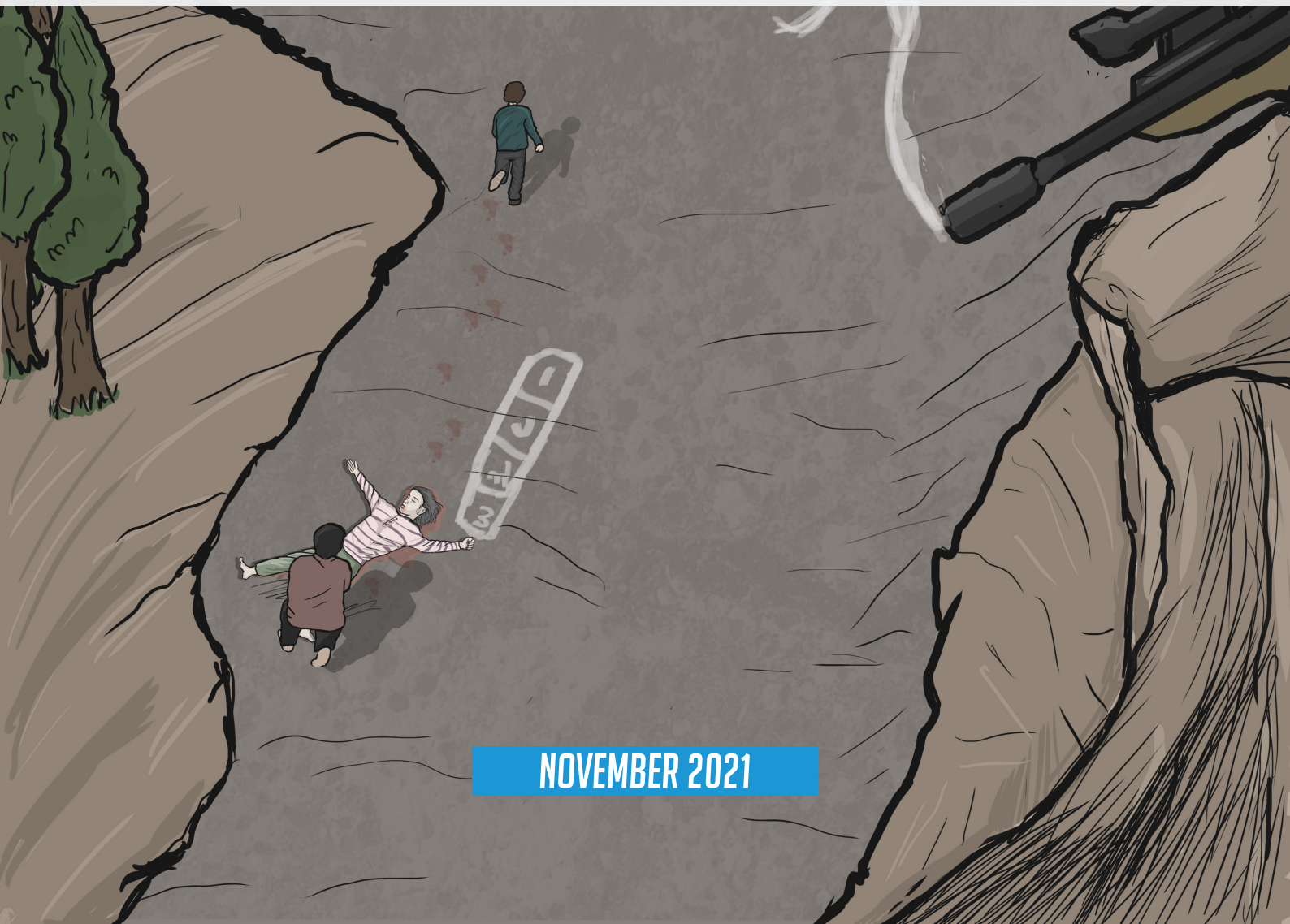
SNIPER HORROR



A HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
RELATED TO SNIPER ATTACKS IN YEMEN

TAIZ AS A MODEL

DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 2015 TO DECEMBER 2020



NOVEMBER 2021



SNIPER HORROR

A HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
RELATED TO SNIPER ATTACKS IN YEMEN

AUGUST 2021

COVER PHOTO WAS TAKEN BY THE YEMENI PHOTOGRAPHER:

KHALED AL-BANNA

It was taken on December 23, 2015 in Al-Zahraa neighborhood in the Kalabah area, east of Taiz city, where residents wrote warning phrases about sniping the residents by the fighters of the Houthi and Saleh forces. These signs warn residents not to approach these places so as not to be exposed to the danger of attacks.

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INTRODUCTION

Among the means of war and its deadly tools used by the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen, there is a weapon that is smaller in size, but more deadly to the lives of civilians, and its bullets do not miss the deadly places in their bodies. It is the sniper weapon. This has become a source of terror for civilians in Yemen especially in areas that have experienced or are still experiencing cycles of fighting. There are many means and weapons used by the parties to the conflict in Yemen, heavy, medium and light. Many watched television clips of heavy weapons being used in attacks against civilians and infrastructure, or against the warring parties by each other. The most prominent of these weapons are tanks, artillery, rocket launchers, indiscriminate launchers, thermal missiles, guided bombs, destructive missiles, and air attacks, but many have not seen a lethal weapon despite its small size, killing hundreds of civilians.

The use of sniper weapons during the events and chapters of the armed conflict has resulted in heinous crimes against civilians although many did not see this weapon being fired at civilians and did not know where the hand that pressed the trigger was hiding. But scenes of victims of this type of

attack have been circulated on many media platforms, in addition to scenes of snipers training in camps prepared for recruits whose mission is to kill using this weapon.

SAM Organization worked during the years of the armed conflict in Yemen to document many of the victims who were killed by snipers, and with this report, it hopes that this crime and its victims will appear on the surface of human rights and media attention so that everyone can see the forms of ugliness that were directed at civilians, and how bullets were cast on their heads, in a premeditated crime that was intended to kill civilians in a violation of the conventions of war.

The laws of war prohibit direct attacks on civilians, as well as premeditate killing them without a military necessity that calls for it, but the reality reveals that the parties to the armed conflict have used sniper attacks against civilians. SAM organization concluded that the Houthi group and the forces of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh had used snipers extensively against civilians, and that the Houthi group alone have used this weapon remarkably after ending its alliance with the forces of former President Saleh. In addition, government forces and forces loyal to the UAE have used this weapon against civilians, albeit to a limited extent.

Although Sam has documented the victims of this weapon's attacks in a number of Yemeni governorates, the size and type of its victims in the Yemeni governorate of Taiz, which has been witnessing an armed conflict for six years, suggests that it has been used violently against civilians, The report focused mainly on citing examples of victims of this weapon in the province.

REPORT METHODOLOGY

Sniper Horror! A human rights report documenting human rights violations during the period from the beginning of March 2015 to the end of December 2020. For five years, SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties has worked on documenting human rights violations in most Yemeni governorates, and the crimes of snipers had a share of documentation. In addition to monitoring, the organization has a team of researchers and collaborators trained to write the human rights story, and to use the internationally applicable monitoring and documentation mechanisms.

The organization's researchers and collaborators are working in extremely dangerous conditions in Yemen, where many campaigns have been launched against the organization by military and political parties that receive support and funding from the United Arab Emirates, and others from the Houthi group, as well as government military forces. It is worth mentioning that SAM Organization was brought to trial by the Public Prosecution under the authority of the Houthis in Sana'a on charges of supporting the Baha'i sect in Yemen, and Emirati and Gulf newspapers and channels launched an unfair media campaign against the organization and its administration⁽¹⁾. The organization's researchers and collaborators became subject to prosecution and harassment from all parties to the conflict in Yemen. However, its team was able to access dozens of facts, victims and witnesses while documenting human rights violations related to sniper attacks and deliberate killings.

(1) For further details, these campaigns, see the WHO's «Dangerous Occupation» report. September 8, 2020

The organization's team inside Yemen and its administration in Geneva, Switzerland, used a number of means to obtain information and reach the victims. In addition to the field trip, the inside team went to document the facts, photograph the victims, listen to them and to eyewitnesses, in addition to interviewing medical sources, visiting hospitals, and going down and photographing to/in the places where the victims fell. The organization also used the available means of communication, received many reports, obtained many televised clips of the victims' stories, and transmitted some of what was broadcasted by the media of the parties to the conflict in their statements and speeches. Doing all of these things, SAM has confirmed the sources, and relied on what it was reassured of after examining, analyzing and matching evidence in accordance with the methodologies applied by human rights organizations and investigation committees.

The organization believes that the findings in this report do not cover reality with all its facts, but rather reveal the extent of human rights violations for the period covered by the report. In addition to presenting a statistic which could reach the number of civilian casualties as a result of sniper attacks in a number of Yemeni governorates, the report lists vivid examples of victims' stories in Taiz governorate, which witnessed the most violent sniper attacks against civilians.



SIGNIFICANT OF THE REPORT

The report is important as it documents the victims of heinous attacks against civilians committed by fighters who use snipers and professionals at time when the armed conflict in Yemen was and still is violent, and it did not receive much attention or documentation.

The report is a historical document that contains many testimonies and stories of civilian victims who did not receive redress or justice during the past period while the judicial authorities did not investigate all the attacks mentioned in the report. It also archives the stories of the victims and preserves the historical memory that contains a lot of ugliness, cruelty and pain.

Moreover, it opens the door wide for those interested in the Yemeni human rights issue to pay attention to a file that has been kept largely silent over the past period as the report establishes the merits of this crime, and how the parties to the conflict justify the use of snipers against civilians.

LEGAL BACKGROUND

International humanitarian law concluded in its constituent conventions that the civilian population must be protected during armed conflicts from any attacks that affect them and stressed the need to take precautions during the implementation of hostile attacks by the parties to the conflict against each other to ensure that the civilian population is not harmed. Because the armed conflict that Yemen is going through is described as a non-international armed conflict, considering that its two parties are government authorities and organized armed groups that have leadership and armament, the principles of international law in general are supposed to be respected by all.



The third common article of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 organized the frameworks for the protection of civilians during non-international armed conflicts, and the Second Additional Protocol to the 1977 Geneva Conventions expanded to include the duties of states to protect civilians during non-international armed conflicts. Yemen has ratified these conventions, the Additional Second Protocol, and the two international covenants on civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights, and this requires that all parties to the armed conflict must abide by these principles that organize the protection of civilians from any attack. While this obligation applies to the Yemeni government, other armed groups must abide by this as long as they possess the organization, arms, command and control.

The Yemeni government is responsible for protecting the civilian population in all Yemeni territory including those not under its authority, and it remains responsible for fulfilling its human rights obligations over all of its territory including parts which it lost control of within the limits of its effective authority⁽¹⁾. It is also

responsible for spreading and implementing the human rights of all people on its territory and those subject to its jurisdiction, and government authorities must investigate all violations that have affected civilians, including deliberate killings by sniper attacks on civilians whether in accordance with their national laws or international covenants.

Behaviors committed by the parties to the conflict in Yemen are subject to the rules of customary international law, which are rules derived from “international customs considered as a law indicated by the frequency of use.” These rules remain binding on all parties to the armed conflict, in addition to being rules independent of treaty law. Within the framework of these rules, many issues that were not clearly addressed in the agreements were organized. The first customary law said, “The parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between civilians and combatants, and attacks shall be directed against combatants only and shall not be directed at civilians.”⁽²⁾

The Yemeni government expressed its desire to join the

(1) Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The human rights situation in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014. Detailed findings of the Group of International and Regional Eminent Experts on Yemen. September 14 - October 2
<https://www.ohchr.org/AR/HRBodies/HRC/YemenGEE/Pages/Index.aspx>

(2) Customary International Humanitarian Law - Volume I: Rules. John-Marie Henkerts-Louise Doswald-Beck - Base 1

Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court on December 28, 2000, but it has not yet ratified it, as the Yemeni constitution restricted the final ratification of international treaties and agreements with the approval of the House of Representatives as well as a decision issued by the Head of State. This does not mean that the International Criminal Court is not authorized to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Yemen as the UN Security Council has the right to refer Yemen's file to the International Criminal Court. The Public Prosecutor of the Criminal Court may also initiate investigations on its own on the basis of information related to crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court⁽³⁾.

According to the data and information collected by "SAM", the crime of murder documented in this report using sniper attacks by the parties to the conflict was committed in a systematic manner, and this type of premeditated killing is prohibited in accordance with the provisions of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions. The

Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court, considered this act to amount to a war crime.⁽⁴⁾

The elements of the war crime were found in the act of premeditated killing using sniper attacks adopted by the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court represented by (1) that the perpetrator kills one or more persons. 2- That this person or persons are either unable to fight, or civilians, paramedics, or clerics who did not actually participate in the fighting. 3- That the perpetrator of the crime was aware of the circumstances which prove this capacity. 4 - That the conduct takes place in the context of and is associated with an armed conflict of a non-international character. 5- That the perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that prove the existence of an armed conflict.⁽⁵⁾

Customary international law regulated the responsibilities of the perpetrators of the crime where "individuals are not only criminally responsible for committing war crimes but also for attempting, aiding, facilitating,

(3) Article (13-b, 15) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted in Rome on 17 July 1998

(4) Article (8-c/1) the Rome Statute

(5) The war crime of willful killing Article 8(2)(c) and Article 8(2)(c)(i)-1. International Criminal Court - Elements of Crimes - Adopted by the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in its first session held in New York during the period from 3 to 10 September 2002 - Human Rights Library - University of Minnesota

providing aid or encouragement for the purpose of committing them, and they are also responsible for planning or abetting for committing war crimes.⁽⁶⁾ Responsibility also includes “commanders and other superior persons for war crimes committed on their orders”⁽⁷⁾ and war crimes committed by their subordinates if they knew or could have known that their subordinates were about to commit or were committing such crimes and did not take all necessary measures and the reasonableness of their authority to prevent their commission, or to punish the persons responsible for them if such crimes are committed.”⁽⁸⁾

(6) Previous reference - Rule 151 of the customary rules

(7) Previous reference - Rule 152 of the customary rules

(8) Previous reference - Rule 152 of the customary rules

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Among the means of war and its deadly tools used by the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen, there is a smaller and more deadly weapon that kills civilians, sniper attacks which have become a source of terror for civilians in Yemen. Many weapons were seen exploding on civilians or infrastructure. However, they did not witness the attacks of snipers, but they saw their effects on the bodies of the victims, and they saw hundreds of dead people covered in their blood.

The sniper attacks have resulted in heinous crimes against civilians, especially women and children. This weapon and its users were professionally prepared, and the media of the warring parties transmitted training sessions for fighters in camps specially prepared for the graduation of recruits trained to use the sniper weapon.

The report reviews human rights violations against civilians related to sniper attacks for the period from the beginning of March 2015 to the end of December 2020 as the organization and its researchers worked to document these attacks throughout that period in extremely dangerous conditions in light of the persecution and restriction of it, its researchers and its collaborators, but they were able to reach dozens of facts, victims and witnesses.

The report gains its importance in the sense that it documents the victims of heinous attacks against civilians in Yemen committed by professional fighters using the sniping weapon for a period of time when the armed conflict was and still is violent, and its victims did not receive much attention and documentation. It is also a historical document that contains many testimonies and stories of civilian victims who did not receive redress or justice. It archives these stories that contain a lot of ugliness, cruelty and pain. The report opens the door wide for those interested in the human rights issue to pay attention to a file that has been kept largely silent over the past period.

The report reflects a picture close to reality as sniper

attacks have been used on a large scale against civilians, and the parties to the conflict have used them against each other unevenly. It reveals that the Houthi group and Saleh's forces during their alliance, and the Houthi group alone after dismantling their alliance with Saleh's forces were the party that used this weapon the most. Because of them, there were hundreds of casualties while government forces and UAE-backed forces used it to a limited extent.

Although the organization has documented the victims of sniper attacks in a number of Yemeni governorates, it focused in its report on the victims of these attacks in the governorate of Taiz, where information indicates that civilians were the most affected by these attacks. The organization has conducted dozens of direct interviews with victims and witnesses and used various means of communication to communicate and listen to other testimonies in circumstances that did not allow direct interviews. The organization has collected many photos and videos of the victims and the locations of the snipers, especially in Taiz, and obtained a lot of information in various ways.

The organization sent letters to the Houthi group and the government forces to ask them about several points in order to convey their point of view, but the Houthi group refused to respond to the organization's letter while the government's Ministry of Defense responded by listing the rules of engagement that it had taken without clarifying other questions. The organization used weapons experts and interviewed or corresponded with doctors and administrations of a number of hospitals, especially in Taiz and Marib, to get a more accurate idea of the nature of weapons, and the effects they leave on the bodies of the victims.

The report included an introduction, legal background and statistic on the number of civilian casualties that the organization was able to reach, three chapters, and recommendations.

The first chapter deals with the reality of the sniper horror, and it includes six topics. The first topic deals with the definition of the sniper, the second talks about what the sniper means to the population, the third topic talks about sniper training camps, the fourth deals with the excessive use of sniper attacks by the Houthi group, the fifth topic talks about former President Ali Abdullah Saleh while inciting and bragging about sniper attacks, and the last topic talks about government forces and UAE-backed military forces and their use of snipers.

The second chapter of the report presents examples of the attacks in Taiz as a witness to the horror of the sniper and includes four investigations. The first talks about a sniper who carefully hunts his victims in reference to the victims

of the medical staff, journalists, and activists. The second chapter talks about women and children as easy target for the sniper while the third topic talks about the government forces' conflict with each other, and the last section talks about the Al Shaqab area in Taiz as a special rural model in which sniper attacks claimed many civilian lives.

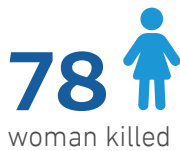
The report concluded in its third chapter to mention those responsible for the sniper attacks who SAM believes are the first-class officials responsible for using their forces for sniper attacks against civilians. The chapter is divided into five topics. The first lists those responsible for sniper attacks in the alliance of Houthi forces and former President Saleh and later the Houthi de facto authority. The second topic lists those responsible for the attacks in the de-facto authority of the Houthi group in Taiz governorate, and the third topic lists officials in the internationally recognized Yemeni government, while the fourth topic lists those responsible for the attacks from the leaders of government forces in Taiz governorate, and the fifth topic lists those responsible for sniper attacks among the Emirati-backed forces.

FIGURES AND NUMBERS

(including statistics for all governorates)

SAM made an effort to reach a real number of victims, but it was met with many challenges and troubles, and what will be presented here are figures revealing the extent of human rights violations related to intentional attacks by snipers for the period covered by the report from March 2015 to the end of December 2020.

A civilian was killed by sniper attacks in several Yemeni governorates



725



A civilian was injured by sniper attacks in several Yemeni governorates



512



SAM monitored the killing of (725) civilians in sniper attacks in a number of Yemeni governorates, including (141) children and (78) women. Most of these victims fell in Taiz governorate where (365) civilians were killed, followed by the city of Aden, in which 140 civilians were killed. Al-Dhalea governorate ranked third where (92) civilians were killed followed by Al-Bayda governorate in which (18) civilians were killed. The death of others by snipping were recorded in the governorates of Hodeidah, Lahj, Shabwa, Abyan and Marib.

As for the parties that committed the sniper attacks, which resulted in the killing of these civilians, what SAM concluded indicates that the forces of the Houthi group and former President Ali Abdullah Saleh are responsible for most of these attacks since (714) civilians were killed because of them. (480) civilians were killed by these forces combined during their alliance. The killing of (234) civilians was recorded in the attacks of the Houthi forces alone after the dissolution of their alliance with Saleh's forces from the beginning of 2018 until the end of the period of the report. Whereas SAM documented the killing of (5) civilians by government forces' attacks, and (3) others who were killed by attacks of pro-Emirati forces in Taiz and the city of Aden, specifically by attacks of Abu al-Abbas Brigades and the Security Belt Forces while the killing of (3) was recorded at the hands of armed groups. With regard to the wounded and disabled due to sniper attacks, SAM documented the injury of 512 civilians including 157 children and 85 women. SAM recorded the injury and disability of more than (345) civilians in the governorate of Taiz while more than (86) civilians were injured in the governorates of Al-Hudaydah and Al-Dhalea, equally between them. The injury of (26) civilians was recorded in Al-Bayda governorate whereas the others were injured in the governorates of Lahj, Abyan and Shabwa.

As for the parties that caused these injuries, the Houthi and Saleh forces were the most prominent actor during their alliance, and the Houthi forces alone after breaking their alliance with Saleh's forces at the beginning of 2018 where the number of casualties from the attacks of this alliance reached (489). SAM documented the injury of 4 civilians in attacks carried out by the Abu al-Abbas Brigades and the UAE-backed Security Belt Forces; on the other hand, SAM documented the injury of 19 civilians in sniper attacks whose perpetrators were not known.

LETTERS TO THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT AND OTHERS

In February 2021, SAM sent letters to conflict parties, parties, and personalities. SAM was keen to convey the viewpoint of a number of parties to the conflict in connection with the sniper attacks and to convey information from their medical and technical sources. It sent a letter to the Houthi group and government forces to clarify a number of issues and violations.

As the Houthi group was asked, in the letter sent by the organization to the Ministry of Human Rights under the Houthis' authority about a number of issues, the most notable of which was what was published by the group's media about carrying out hundreds of attacks with snipers, and SAM asked them about the accusations against their forces of killing hundreds of civilians in addition to knowing the group's opinion about the charges against them for the killing of a number of civilians. We cited examples of them in the letter, including activists, women and children who were killed in the Houthi attacks in Taiz, but the Ministry of Human Rights did not respond to the organization's letter.

SAM also sent a letter to the Yemeni Ministry of Defense of the Yemeni government, asking it about the rules of engagement taken by government forces during the implementation of the attacks, as well as about the facts of sniper attacks published by government media, in addition to knowing the roles played by the ministry to refer those accused of crimes of human rights violations to justice, especially the accused in the city of Taiz. The ministry responded to the organization by listing the measures it had taken in relation to the rules of engagement and said that it referred those who were proven to be accused of violating the rules of international humanitarian law to the judiciary, but it did not provide evidence of defendants who had been referred to the judiciary, and SAM did not obtain evidence to confirm this.

Furthermore, SAM sent letters to the administration of Al-Thawra and Al-Rawda Hospitals in the city of Taiz and the Marib and General Hospital in the city of Marib and asked experts in arms and military affairs about a number of technical issues related to weapons, attacks, and the effects of injuries on the victims.



CHAPTER 1:

Sniper Horror

The attacks launched by the sniper fighters against civilians were a source of terror for the population because these attacks posed a threat to their lives and to the practice of their normal lives as the victims are shot by sniper bullets at the time they think they are safe whether they are in their homes, walking on public roads, or at work. The media circulated videos documenting sniper attacks on civilians, especially in the city of Taiz(1). This weapon, which is used by specialized fighters, has become a source of concern for the population, and in many cases its terror goes far beyond the indiscriminate bombing of the population and its civilian neighborhoods.

(1) The Yemeni Scene. A shocking video footage showing the moment a Houthi sniper killed a woman in Taiz and prevented her from being rescued. February 6, 2016.

To emphasize, the visits of the organization's field researchers to the places near the concentration of sniper fighters were a real test to measure the terror experienced by the residents when they passed near these places. The real horror experienced by the researchers during their visit made them face death in a moment of life in which they were destined to survive and be safe.

In addition to the large numbers of civilian casualties recorded by the organization due to being targeted by sniper weapons, it was one of the most terrifying causes of terror among civilians. What the organization also concluded from its collection of medical reports and doctors' testimonies confirms that this weapon often hits the fatal parts of the victim's body. If it does not lead to death, it causes a permanent disability to the victim, and this explains the increase in the number of deaths over the wounded within the statistics collected by the organization on victims in Taiz governorate, central Yemen.

The organization listened to weapons experts and medical sources in the hospitals where the victims were treated. All of them confirmed that some types of sniper projectiles have the property of exploding inside the bodies of the victims, and this explains the rapid killing or disability of those who lived after being snipped. Also, the injury in sensitive and deadly places in the victims' bodies explains the snipers' reliance on scopes attached to weapons to bring the bodies closer, which confirms the desire for premeditated murder among the perpetrators of this crime.

TOPIC 1:

Who is the Sniper?

The sniper has two concepts that the organization deduced from the testimonies it heard and the impression the sniper left on the victims and the civilian population. The first concept: He is the fighter who uses the sniper weapon against civilians since he is a fighter who possesses professionalism and received training that enabled him to use this weapon with high accuracy, and his use of the weapon resulted in hundreds of casualties. The sniper has a desire for premeditated killing that was inspired by his leaders during training and guidance, and by handing him over this precise weapon, the intentions were clear in using it to kill.

The other concept: it is the weapon used by professional fighters to attack civilians, and it was also used against opposing combatants. In describing this weapon, SAM relied on what was published by specialized media sites, on the testimony of Yemeni military experts, and on what was published by the media of the parties to the conflict in their presentation of the nature of this weapon as it was difficult for the organization to obtain pictures of this weapon from the reality of its

use by the combatants, so it resorted to these sources.

The Russian "Sputnik" agency reported that: (Yemen is witnessing the use of various sniper weapons. Reports from this country speak of the use of sniper rifles dating back to World War II and modern sniper rifles, such as the American "M82" rifle or the Russian "OSV-96" rifle. The warring parties in Yemen obtained sniper weapons from the armories of the Yemeni armed forces. The Yemeni Special Forces and the Republican Guard had acquired various types of Russian light weapons, including "OSV-96" sniper rifles and "RPK-203", "Pechenig" and "Kor" machine guns.)⁽¹⁾

RT channel published in one of its reports (Yemen was a permanent customer for the purchase of weapons from the former Soviet Union and the Russian Federation later. In recent years, Yemen has turned into a permanent customer for the purchase of various types of Russian weapons... It is noteworthy that the value of all Russian military exports to Yemen over the years of cooperation with it amounted to \$9 billion.)⁽²⁾ Many of those interested

(1) SPUTNIK .Arabic "Military Monitoring. Hacking" The Russian military response appears in Yemen. GMT 05:52 03.16.2018 (updated (GMT 06:30) 03.16.2018)
<https://bit.ly/2RAmXOD>

(2) RT. A Brief on Russian-Yemeni Relations. Date of Publishing: 02.04.2013 | 12:19 GMT | Last update: 10.19.2015 |

are aware that the warehouses of the Yemeni army were looted after the Houthi group (Ansar Allah) took control of the capital, Sana'a, after September 21, 2014, and its excessive use of this weapon with the help of the forces of former President Saleh was the result of this control over the warehouses of the Yemeni army.

On August 23, 2017, the Military Industrialization Department under the authority of the Houthis revealed the manufacture and development of eight different and multiple sniper weapons inside Yemen, using Yemeni experiences, stressing that it is working to reach the degree of self-sufficiency in the manufacture of snipers in the near future.⁽³⁾

The Armament Research Service website, which specializes in armaments research around the world, has verified the information contained in the report of the Military Industrialization Department, which is under the authority of the Houthis, and stated that there are many exaggerations in describing

the ability, efficiency, and danger of these weapons by the Houthis in some cases, as well as the fact that these ranges vary greatly according to the skill of the user.⁽⁴⁾

The Security Council reports on Yemen have been published on arms smuggling operations carried out by the Islamic Republic of Iran, which pass through multiple routes, including Omani sea and land routes. Among those reports is the report of the Panel of Experts of the Security Council's Yemen Sanctions Committee, which published that there are two arms smuggling routes to Yemen. The first is the coasts of Oman and Yemen and is used to smuggle high-value military shipments. The second route is off the coast of Somalia which is used to smuggle small arms and light weapons... GPS coordinates showed that one of the arms smuggling boats had earlier sailed between ports in Somalia, Yemen and the Islamic Republic of Iran... The panel received information that the Australian Navy had seized a dhow

09:30 GMT |

<https://bit.ly/3h8MbOP>

(3) Sassa post site. Far from exaggerations, what weapons do the Houthis have? August 29, 2018

(4) RES. Craft-produced anti-materiel rifles and light cannon in Yemen. September 10, 2017.

<https://armamentresearch.com/craft-produced-anti-materiel-rifles-and-light-cannon-in-yemen/>

in the Gulf of Oman in June 2019 with a shipment of 476,000 rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition. The crew of the boat was Iranian and Pakistani and reported that they had received the shipment from the Naval Forces of the Revolutionary Guards in Bandar Abbas.⁽⁵⁾

The Yemeni military expert Ali al-Dhahab stated that there are eight types of snipers used by the Houthi group, which are (Zulfiqar 1, Zulfiqar 2, Qassem, Hasim, Khatif, Sarem, Ashtar, and Sarmad). He added that their use varies between what is directed at individuals, equipment, or military fortifications, and that the Houthis attribute the source of its manufacture to the group's Military Industrialization Department, but what is certain is that its origin is external while the Houthis made inorganic structural modifications to it and added modern work devices to it that make it more effective in terms of range, injury and impact, as well as changing its names to serve the group's ideas.

(5) United Nations Security Council. Final report of the expert group. No. S/2021/79 of January 25, 2021 p.32,31

TOPIC 2:

What does the Sniper Mean to the Population?

The organization delved into the feelings and sentiments of a number of residents and victims as they suffer from sniper attacks, and the anxiety and instability these attacks represent for their lives. Among these feelings, one of the residents expressed his pain from losing his child to a sniper attack. Majed Mahyoub, whose little girl, Lulua, 5 years old, was killed, said, "I heard the sniper's shot while I was at a certain distance from the village, so my guts burned and I said to myself, this is an evil shot. When I learned of my daughter being sniped, I was very sad for her. I cried and remembered the kiss she gave on my face when I said goodbye to her and she said, "Hey, Daddy, buy me a doll." Those words are still ringing in my ears."

This feeling was not the only feeling that Majid had after the killing of his daughter, but rather the feeling of many residents, and before that, the feelings of horror represented by the sniper attacks were overwhelming for all of the civilians SAM met, to expect that a sniper will follow your movements and wait for the right moment to point his gun and death bullets at you, that is the most terrifying psychological torment that the residents can imagine and live with on a permanent basis, especially those in the areas close to the fighting places.

TOPIC 3:

Snipers' Training Camps

SAM monitored footages displayed by media belonging to the warring parties in Yemen about the training operations of snipers, and sniper attacks carried out by fighters against their opponents. Although it is difficult to examine the footages of the attacks, whether they are directed against fighters or against civilians; however, what the organization can confirm is that all parties to the conflict in Yemen used the sniper rifle through trained and specialized teams for sniper operations, and the Houthi and Saleh forces, during their alliance, and the Houthi forces, on their own after dismantling their alliance with Saleh's forces, were the parties that used snipers the most. The Houthi forces have allocated a sniper unit within the structure of their combat forces, and the group's media outlets⁽¹⁾ reported by the military spokesman for their forces that the sniper unit carried out 40,292 sniping operations on the front lines with the "aggression" and its tools since its inception according to what they said.

During the alliance of the Houthi and Saleh forces, their media outlets broadcasted footages of training and graduating batches of snipers from the Martyr al-Musali Camp in the Sanhan district, the birthplace of former President Saleh. Yemen Today channel reported a video report on the graduation of a new batch of professional snipers in this camp, which was led by Tareq Muhammad Abdullah Saleh.⁽²⁾

(1) Al Masirah TV website. 23/3/2020
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tF5zwgo5K0I>

(2) Yemen Today. A new batch from the camp of the martyr Hassan al-Mulsi is heading to the fronts of honor. 22 - 08 - 2017.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRc_OMXxbw

TOPIC 4:

the Houthi Group and the Excessive Use of Sniper Attacks

According to the data on which the report is based and from the testimonies and statistics collected by the organization, the alliance of Houthi and Saleh forces have used the sniper weapon excessively against civilians to the extent that its use has become a point of bragging by the parties of this alliance and their media. Saleh's forces, which retained their loyalty to him after he stepped down from power, were a rich source of Houthi forces in obtaining sniper weapons. Military expert Ali al-Dhahab confirmed that the Houthi forces obtained abundantly this type of weapon after controlling the units of the Special Forces, Counter-Terrorism, the Presidential Protection, and the Special Task Forces in the Special Security Forces, and they obtained them from warehouses that were under the control of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh after he had been killed at the end of 2017.

Many members of these security units had received training in the use of sniper weapons during the rule of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and these units obtained qualitative sniper weapons from different countries such as the United States of America and the Russian

Federation, and many of these recruits participated in the fighting within the alliance of Houthis and Saleh forces.

After the end of this alliance with the killing of Saleh by the Houthis at the end of 2017, the Houthi group became the de facto dominant party managing the combat. The Houthi group has established a unit specialized in snipers within what is known as the Army Forces and the Popular Committees which they run. The Houthi media have reported footages of sniping operations committed by the fighters of this unit.⁽¹⁾

The organization had asked the Houthi group in its letter to them about their response to what the organization had monitored of the killing and wounding of more than (700) civilians by Houthi sniper attacks in conjunction with the forces of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and what measures the group has taken to stop the sniper attacks and hold their perpetrators accountable, but the Ministry of Human Rights, which is under the control of the Houthis, declined to respond to the organization's letter.

(1) Yemen channel in its version of the Houthis. footages of sniper operations carried out by the sniper unit in the army and the popular committees for the month of February. 06-03-2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRc_OMXxbw

TOPIC 5:

Saleh (the Former President) Brags about the Crime of Sniping

The former President Ali Abdullah Saleh employed his influence within his General People's Congress party, the sheikhs of the tribes loyal to him, and the forces run by his family members, especially the Republican Guard, the Special Forces and the National Security Apparatus, to facilitate and support the Houthi group as they were preparing their fighters to storm the capital. This unlimited support and backup had a significant impact on the Houthis' quick control of the capital, and the Houthi-Saleh alliance was evident in their formation of the so-called Supreme Political Council after the overthrow of the capital.

SAM monitored a number of televised speeches and interviews that Saleh gave while inciting his forces to fight what he called "the mercenaries of aggression" and urging his fighters and supporters to use snipers to kill his opponents, with a de facto boss-subordinate relationship, they listened to him and carried out his orders. In his famous speech in front of leaders of his party, the General People's Congress in Al-Bayda governorate, Saleh ordered his fighters in Taiz and Mocha to shoot people with snipers, and said: ((Those who fight in Taiz are terrorists. They are all ISIS members, and those who fight in Mocha are also members of ISIS. But there are men and personalities, with snipers, knock them down! Shoot them with all kinds of weapons! Burn them! Teach them a lesson. O fighters, we will not return again to our mothers' wombs. It is only one life).⁽¹⁾

Saleh and leaders of the Houthi group also appeared on multiple military occasions urging their supporters to fight. On one occasion, Saleh appeared with Saleh al-Sammad, head of the Supreme Political Council, and they were on a bilateral visit to the camp of the martyr al-Masali, led by Tareq, nephew of former President Ali Saleh, urging the fighters in this camp to fight. Three months after that appearance, Saleh's Yemen Today channel broadcasted a video report in which it described snipers as the ultimate weapon, nightmare and terror against what they called the "aggression." It said more than 400 professional snipers out of 850 graduated and were trained in the camp.⁽²⁾

(1) Yemen Today Channel. The leader addresses an important speech in the expanded meeting of the leaders and cadres of the conference in Al-Bayda. 23 - 02 - 2017
<https://bit.ly/3enCwSM>

(2) 400 YEMENTODAYCHANNELTV1. A sniper from the camp of the martyr commander Hassan al-Mulsi exacerbates the enemy's terror. 29 - 10 - 2017
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ttk0dDbcuKQ>

TOPIC 6:

the Government Forces and the Emirati-Backed Forces used this Weapon

In addition to the information that the organization has about the government forces' use of snipers to a limited extent against their fighters, and their implementation of a number of attacks against civilians, as well as the UAE-backed forces' use of snipers, both in their fight against government forces in Aden and Abyan, or its use by military forces on the western coast against Houthi forces. These force have committed multiple attacks against civilians. The military expert, Ali al-Dhahab, confirmed that government forces used sniper attacks in varying degrees in time and place. He also confirmed that the forces of the Transitional Council, the Giants Forces and the National Resistance use these weapons in a professional manner which has proven effective, especially in the fighting areas of the western coast.

Media websites belonging to the government forces broadcasted footages of what they called sniping operations carried out by their fighters against members of what

they described as "coup militias", in reference to the Houthi forces. SAM confirms that these footages are additional confirmation that the government forces possess sniper teams and weapons specialized in sniping, with which they target their military opponents. The organization monitored civilian casualties due to the government forces' use of this type of weapon in their war against the Houthi group, which is an indication of the danger of military transformations and the possession of all parties of this type of weapon with which premeditated killings of civilians are carried out.

In the response of the government's Ministry of Defense to SAM's letter regarding the rules of engagement taken by government forces and bringing those responsible for sniping operations to justice, the ministry said that its forces' use of snipers is for self-defense and to combat, neutralize and eliminate hostile snipers' actions.

CHAPTER II:

Taiz as a Model of Sniper's Horror

The fighting in Taiz represents the epitome of the conflict in Yemen. The long period of the conflict that has spanned since April 2015 until now, and the accompanying violations of international humanitarian law and human rights is an indication of the extent to which the parties to the conflict are committed to protecting the population or not.



The information collected by SAM reveals that the Houthi and Saleh forces during their alliance, and the Houthi forces after the dissolution of their alliance with Saleh launched deadly attacks against civilians. The Houthi forces are still continuing this approach. These forces launched sniper attacks largely in their war against government forces at a time when many fighters of the government forces fell into this type of attack under the military operations between the two sides, the government forces started using this method of attacks against the forces of Saleh and the Houthis and used it in a limited context against civilians.

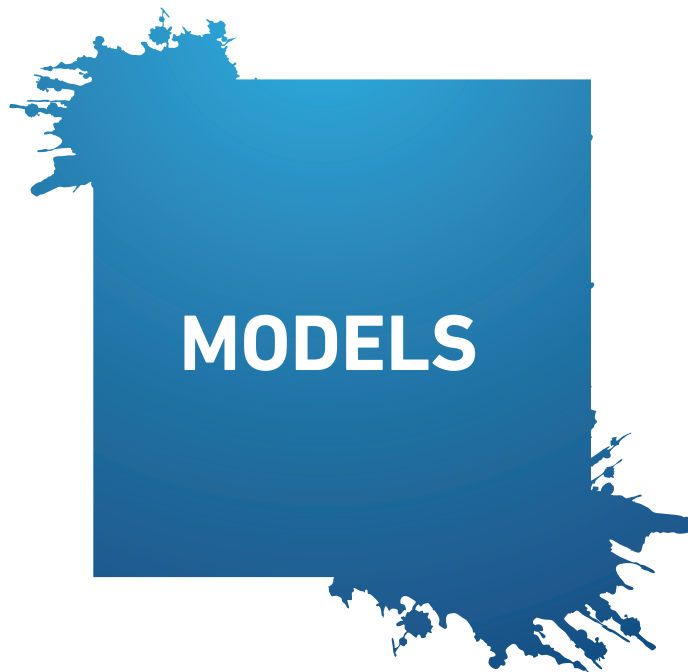
The footages collected by the team of SAM during its filming of the victims of sniper attacks show the ugliness of what was committed against civilians as it clearly shows the terror controlling them which is caused by the snipers who are stationed in high places and buildings, and the hills overlooking the residential neighborhoods.

The residents of a number of neighborhoods in the city of Taiz have built cement barriers at their entrances to prevent the sniper from seeing them and their homes and protect them from being targeted. Some of them put up cloth covers to prevent snipers from seeing civilians passing by, and in some neighborhoods close to the fighting sites, residents placed figures on which they wrote warning phrases of sniper attacks.

TOPIC 1:

A Killer who hunts his Victims Carefully (Medical Staff and Activists)

From the statistics that SAM was able to collect, it became clear that civilians, including medical staff, journalists and activists, were an easy target for sniper attacks belonging to the Houthi and Saleh forces, which indicates that these forces did not implement the principle of distinction between fighters and civilians. They were not concerned about that, and they took anybody moving in front of them as a target. The testimonies collected by SAM show that sniper attacks have become systematic and what the snipers are doing has become a matter of awareness and acceptance by their superiors, so the matter has become a source of pride for the Houthi forces to the extent of filming sniping scenes whether in Taiz or other provinces.



The work of medical teams was one of the most dangerous humanitarian tasks during the armed conflict as they worked actively at the beginning of the conflict in Taiz, but the humanitarian work carried out by these medical teams and health teams had severe risks that amounted to the deliberate targeting of their personnel and tools. SAM documented the killing of (5) paramedics and the wounding of 19 others. Dr. Abdul Halim Abdul-Ilah Al-Asbahi and Dr. Jamal Muhammad Al-Qadasi were among the first victims of deliberate attacks on medical staff. The first was killed and the other was wounded by a sniper's bullets and a deliberate targeting of their medical vehicle on Monday, April 20, 2015.

The facts are summed up that

Dr. Abdul Halim and his colleague al-Qadasi

were performing their medical duties on board a Yemeni Red Crescent vehicle, during which they provided aid to fighters who fell due to the conflict, which drew the attention of the Houthi and Saleh forces to those medical cars that do their work in these difficult circumstances. On Monday, April 20, 2015, the two doctors tried to rescue soldiers from inside the headquarters of the 35th Armored Brigade, west of the city of Taiz, which was witnessing fierce fighting between these forces on one side and the forces of the Houthis and Saleh on the other. Then both of Abdul Halim and al-Qadasi were targeted with sniper weapons. As a result, the doctor Abdul Halim was killed and his companion, Dr. Al Qadasi, was wounded.

SAM met the doctor, Muhammad al-Qadasi, after he had been injured, and he said: (Abdul Halim and I were heading to the headquarters of the 35th Armored Brigade to provide aid to the wounded. One of the gunmen called us from the side of Ahmed Farag School to stop and shot the car. We passed that danger and entered the camp and were able to get the wounded into the car. We waited for the shooting to subside. Half an hour later, we were allowed to leave, but the targeting of our medical vehicle intensified when the Yemeni Red Crescent flag was raised, so we had to stop and take cover inside one of the rooms. When the shooting calmed down on the vehicle, I ran into it and the gunshots were chasing us." The victim adds, "When we arrived in front of the Toyota Car Agency, I was hit by three bullets in my right and left foot. Abdul Halim told me, "Do not stop, but I became unable to drive."

The victim added: (After my injury, a bullet hit the head of Abdul Halim, and I did not hear his voice after that. He died immediately. Abdul-Alam Abdul-Qader, our escort, carried us on a car after our ambulance broke down, and took us to Taiz Hospital and from there to Al-Hikma Hospital and then to Yemen

International Hospital.” The victim goes on to say, “Those who targeted us and our ambulance car were the Houthi and Saleh gunmen who were besieging the place. One of their snipers targeted the ambulance car on the first day and broke the back frames, as previously, armed men affiliated with those forces at one of the security barriers prevented us from carrying out our humanitarian work.” We tried to convince them that we were performing a humanitarian mission, but the gunmen responded that they were Ansar Allah if they said they would do something, it means they would do it, and they actually carried out their threat and killed my colleague and hit me in the feet, and they looted the ambulance car after targeting it.”

Reham al-Badr

the human rights activist and the monitor in the National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations to Human Rights, is one of the victims of sniper attacks as she and her colleague Momen Saeed were killed while documenting human rights violations in the Al-Sarmin area, east of Taiz. One of the snipers of the Houthi forces fired two shots, each of which hit Reham and Momen, killing them instantly, on Thursday afternoon, February 8, 2018.

SAM met the human rights activist Ahmed Abdul Fattah Al-Samit, who was accompanying them during their killing, and he said: (We were on a visit to the Al-Sarmin area to document the victims of the conflict, and we documented what we were able to document in the area. On our return we stopped for a while on the road, and we were surprised by a sniper’s bullet hitting the head of our colleague Momen Saeed. We tried to rescue him, but the other blow hit Reham al-Badr in the stomach and killed her instantly. A group of young men rushed to us and took the two bodies and took me with them until they brought us to Salh Palace. From there, the bodies of Reham and Moamen were taken to the morgue of Al-Rawda Hospital. Al-Samit added that the shooting was from one side of the hills opposite us, in which Houthi gunmen are stationed.)

SAM also met with the humanitarian

activist Dalia Mohammed

who was accompanying Reham and Momen during their killing, and she said: (When Reham went to the villages to document the violations, she told me, “sit here in your place and I will come back to you.” After about twenty minutes, I heard the sound of bullets, and my mind was confused as to whether this was targeting Reham and her companions, and unfortunately, Reham was returned to us but as a corpse carried on the car and Momen was a headless body.)

Photojournalist Ahmed Abd al-Latif al-Shaibani, who was working as a cameraman for the state-run Yemen TV channel, was shot dead by a sniper in the Al-Hasab area in the center of Taiz on Tuesday afternoon, February 16, 2016. Al-Shaibani was on a journalistic mission to survey and photograph the fires that broke out in a factory due to the armed conflict. While Al-Shaibani was holding the camera in his hand and he and four of his fellow journalists were crossing one of the streets, one of the snipers of the Houthi and Saleh forces stationed in one of the buildings shot him in the head, and he died instantly.

The media circulated a video of the moment of sniping and killing Al-Shaibani⁽¹⁾, whose content was confirmed by one of Al-Shaibani's colleagues, who was standing on the other side of the street to film the moment his fellow journalists fled during the outbreak of clashes between the Houthi and Saleh forces on the one hand and the forces of what is known as "popular resistance"⁽²⁾ on the the other hand.

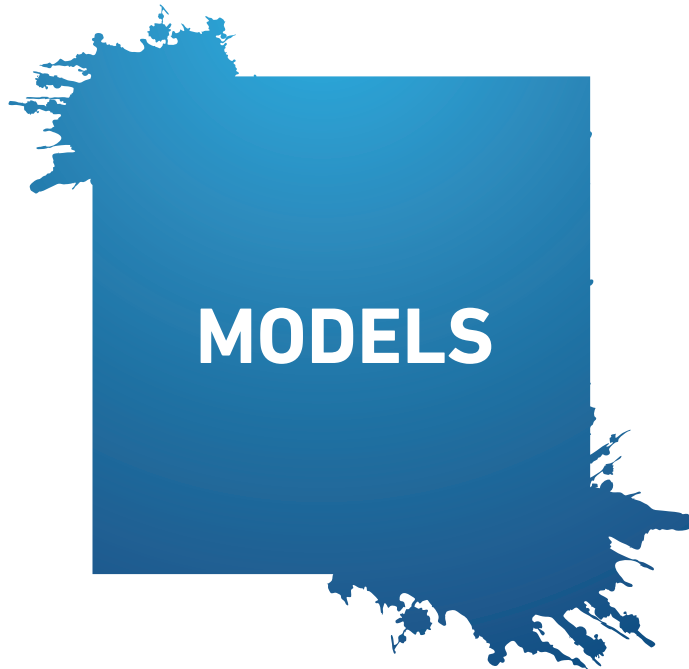
(1) al-Atehad newspaper. The moment the photojournalist "Ahmed al-Shaibani" was killed by Houthi snipers in Taiz, February 17, 2016
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3qcwSbdhzY>

(2) An irregular militia formed in the city of Taiz to fight the Houthi and Saleh forces, and it was receiving support and funding from the Yemeni government and the countries of the Arab coalition, before it was later integrated into the structure of the government military forces.

TOPIC 2:

Women and Children are Easy Target

It is assumed that women and children enjoy special protection from offensive operations and war attacks carried out by the parties to the conflict because they are the weakest group among the population, but they were the least protected and most vulnerable to attacks throughout the years of the war. When extrapolating the statistics collected by the organization, it became clear the enormity of the crimes committed against women and children in all Yemeni governorates, and because women and children in Yemen often play social roles for their families, whether in grazing, fetching water or wood logging, their targeting by sniper attacks was remarkable. Many of them were killed or wounded and disabled by sniper bullets targeting their bodies. Statistics indicate that in the governorate of Taiz alone more than 157 people have been killed, and more than (110) children have been injured. More than (71) women have been killed, and the same number wounded.



MODELS

The child Basma Razzaz Ghaleb Farhan

12 years old, her pain is summed up by one of her relatives who said: (Basma lived a harsh life after her father had been affected by mental illness, not realizing that this painful life that stole her father's mind, and thus his love and affection, will steal her life as well, but this time by a bullet of a sniper. Basma was living with the rest of her family in one of her relatives' house in the old airport district, west of the city of Taiz. At one of the nights of the month of Ramadan and around 3:00 AM on Sunday, June 2, 2019, Basma was eating suhoor with her grandfather, grandmother and aunts in the lobby of the house when a sniper's bullet penetrated the window of the house and resides in her neck).

Her grandmother said: (Houthi gunmen control the Al-Qari Hill overlooking the neighborhood in which we live. From that hill, someone aimed his rifle at Basma's body while she was holding a cup of tea in her hand. Blood flowed from her body and we were crying out to those who could save us; consequently, her uncle came and took her to Al-Buraihi Hospital, and from there to Al-Safwa Hospital. She underwent surgery and then was transferred to the intensive care room. The victim's relative adds, Basma remained suffering and wrestling with pain in her heart and small body for a week. When the sun rose on the day of Eid al-Fitr while she was in the hospital. Her brothers went to visit her, bringing new clothes for the Eid, which she got from a benefactor, and on the second morning of Eid, corresponding to June 7, 2019, Basma lost her strength and was overcome by death so that her soul could ascend to heaven).

During their control of the Mashra'a and Hadnan district in the southern countryside of Taiz, in the summer of 2015, the forces of the Houthi and former President Ali Abdullah Saleh carried out a number of attacks against civilians, especially sniper attacks as those forces had taken control of this district from early due to its strategic location controlling the city of Taiz. These forces deployed sniper fighters in a number of high mountains in the district, and these snipers turned their weapons against civilians, killing and wounding many. The boy, Musharref Muhammad Abdul Jalil, was one of the victims of this type of attack.

Musharef

16, was killed on the morning of Eid al-Fitr, corresponding to July 17, 2015, by a sniper belonging to the Houthi and Saleh forces. SAM met with a number of his relatives and eyewitnesses, and the victim's father said: (At eight o'clock on the day of Eid, Musharef was sitting on the roof of the house, dressed in

Eid clothes, and he was proud of this day, which represents a joy for us and for the children in particular. While he was sitting, he was hit in the head by a bullet, and it became clear from the position of its entrance that it had been shot from the direction of Masoud Hill in the Hadnan area, which was controlled by Houthi militants). Abdul Fattah Ismail, an eyewitness, said: (I heard screaming in the house of Muhammad Abdul Jalil, I hurried from my house to my neighbor's house, and I found that Musharef had been shot. We transferred him directly to Al-Saeed Health Center, where he was given some first aid. Then we transferred him to Yemen International Hospital in the city of Taiz, where he stayed for four days and was in a state of complete coma until he died of that injury).

Majed Mahyoub

the father of the girl, Lulua, began recounting his tragedy with the death of his daughter, asking the Houthi group, what was the fault of my innocent child, whose life was ended by a "sniper" while she was smiling for the last time at her little sister?

This question was the initiation of Majed's talk after the killing of his five-year-old daughter, Lulua, with a sniper's bullet on Tuesday morning, October 22, 2019 near his home in the rural "Tubisha'a" area, west of Taiz. The girl's father said: (Lulua was playing with her little sister while my wife was cleaning the house. I said goodbye to all of them and set off for the city of Taiz. When I moved away from the outskirts of the village, I heard a gunshot, and my guts were burnt and my soul whispered that it was an evil shot, and this is what happened. I received the news that my daughter, Lulua, had been injured. He added that the Houthi sniper, stationed in the Hill of Bait Aqil, which is about three hundred meters from my house, pointed his rifle at my child and fired a bullet at her that entered from her right shoulder, passed through the chest and exited from the left armpit.)

Lulua's father adds: (My brother took my daughter to Al-Rawda Hospital in the city of Taiz, but she died on the way. We buried her helplessly. He said, "When I received the news of her injury, I was very sad and cried over her and remembered when she kissed me on my face and called me and said, Daddy, buy me a "doll". Her words are still ringing in my ears).

Safia Mahyoub Qassem

aged (45), one of the victims of sniper attacks belonging to the parties to the conflict /as a sniper deliberately shot her while she was next to her house in the Al-Zunouj neighborhood, north of Taiz. She was collecting her furniture to flee to the countryside of Taiz on Wednesday, June 17, 2015.

SAM documented the crime and met the victim's husband and two of her neighbors in the neighborhood. Khaled Farhan, the victim's husband, said: (My wife went out with me from the house to the grocery store which I owned so that we could collect the tools to go to the village. I entered to the grocery store whereas my wife stood in front of the door. While I was collecting the food, I heard her screaming and saying "they killed me." I went out to her while she was lying on the ground. I called out to my neighbors. They came and took her to Al-Rawda Hospital. The doctors took her into the operating room to perform a surgery for her kidneys. A few minutes later, one of them came out and told me that she passed away). The victim's husband added: (My wife was hit by a gunshot that entered from the left fissure and exited from the right fissure, and hit her kidneys. He said, "I cannot determine the direction from which the bullet was shot, and I hold the responsibility of killing my wife to the Houthis-Saleh forces from one side and the forces of the popular resistance from the other side).

The child, Ruwaida Saleh Ahmed

(7) years old, was killed by a Houthi sniper, while she was carrying water to her home in the Kalabah neighborhood on the evening of Monday, August 17, 2020. A picture of the victim was circulated on social media while her brother, who is three years older than her, was dragging her in the middle of the street with blood dripping from her head, and the " a plastic gallon container" that she was carrying was near her.

SAM listened to witnesses at the scene, including her brother, and the incident is summed up in that Ruwaida and her brother Amari went to fetch water from one of the tanks near the house. When she returned home, pulling a water container in the middle of the street, she was hit by a bullet in the head. It was shot from the direction of Abu al-Dhahab Hill where a sniper of the Houthi forces is stationed according to the residents' testimonies in the neighborhood.

The young man, Ahmed Al-Sabri

who photographed the girl after she had been sniped said: (I was leaving the house, but I forgot my phone and went back to my room and took it. Then I heard the sound of a gunshot, so I came out from the balcony of my room and saw the child slowly lying on the ground with a water container next to her. I took a picture of her while her brother was dragging her. Ahmed adds that a number of civilians fell in this place by the bullets of the sniper, who is stationed in the Abu al-Dhahab hill, northeast of Taiz city).

SAM listened to the witness,

Bashir Ahmed Ali

who said: (I was next to my house when I heard the sound of a gunshot. I turned and saw Ruwaida Saleh lying on the ground. I tried to take her to save her, but I hesitated as I feared for my life and thought that the Houthi sniper would target me. I called to “Amri”, the victim’s brother, and asked him to pull Ruwaida so that we could remove her from the place opposite the sniper’s station. Her brother went, indifferent to the dangers of targeting him, and dragged her to a place that was hidden from the sniper’s view, so I carried her on a motorcycle and took her to Al-Rawda Hospital, and from there to Al-Safwa Hospital, where doctors performed a surgery on her head, and were able to save her life).

SAM met the child

Amri, Ruwaida’s brother

and he said: (Ruwaida and I went to fetch water from the water tank under our house. We filled the water, and I went back to play with the children and left my sister next to the water container in the middle of the street. In a few minutes, I heard the sound of a gunshot and I heard voices calling for me to return. Hence I went back to the place and found my sister lying next to the water container. I dragged her to the side of the street and one of the young men took her to the hospital).

Fatima Muhammad Farea

aged (46), one of the victims of the attacks on the residents who smuggle their basic needs because of the blockade of the entrances in the city of Taiz.

With the beginning of the closure of the Houthi and Saleh forces of the entrances in the city of Taiz, the residents were forced to smuggle their basic needs from Al-Hawban area to the city center on foot, stealthily from fighters and snipers who were stationed in buildings and facilities. Fatima Farea was one of the victims of the sniper. She was shot while carrying a gas cylinder at the main eastern entrance of Taiz, on the afternoon of Friday, February 5, 2016.

SAM met with a number of the victim’s relatives and eyewitnesses. Abdo Hassan Yousef, a relative of the victim, said: (Fatima was returning from al-Qasr tour with a gas cylinder on her head, and she was passing by in the Al-Zahra neighborhood in the east of the city. One of the snipers hit her with his rifle with two bullets, one in her left leg and the other in her head. The witness added, I was near the site of the victim’s fall, so I walked towards her to give

her first aid, but the sniper continued to snipe towards us to prevent me from helping her. We were not able to go to her until night fell. When we took her to the hospital, she was dead already. The witness adds, the gunshots were coming the direction of one of the houses where the Houthi and Saleh snipers are stationed next to the central security camp).

The two sisters

Jamala, 45 years old and Fatima, 43 years old the daughters of Ahmed Muhammad Ali, were attacked by snipers while they were collecting herbs for the cattle north of Taiz. The first was killed and the second was wounded in the right leg while trying to help her sister.

SAM met with three witnesses and relatives of the two victims, and Jamal Abdel Nour said: (On Saturday morning, September 6, 2019, Jamala and Fatima, as usual, were gathering herbs for the cattle they had in the Al-Moftesh neighborhood. On that day, one of the Houthi snipers who were on Al-Waash Mountain fired two bullets at Fatima, hitting her in the stomach and right leg, so Jamala took off her head scarf and tied it to her sister's leg and stomach to save her from injury. The witness adds: Then Jamala left her sister Fatima and went to ask people to save her sister. When she returned with a group of paramedics and as soon as she approached her sister, the sniper shot her heart and she died instantly).

Abdo Muhammad Yasser

the husband of the injured Fatima, adds: (I went with others to help my wife, but the sniper targeted my sister-in-law Jamala with a bullet in her heart and she fell to the ground. We tried to rescue the two of them, but we were not able to. After that, a resident named Afif came with his wife and they were able to drag Fatima and Jamala from the place where they fell, and we took them to Al Safwa Hospital. The doctors told us that Jamala had passed away, and my wife Fatima had fractured her right leg, so the doctors decided she should go under a surgical intervention to fix the bone. The victim's husband accused the Houthi forces of targeting his wife and sister-in-law Jamala by sniping from al-Wash Mountain site where they are stationed.

Mrs. Saud Saif Abdo Ibrahim

aged (55), was injured by a sniper attack while she was in the yard of her house in the village of Najd al-Qahfa, Jabal Habashi on May 1, 2019. Saud is one of more than ten civilians previously targeted by snipers affiliated with Houthi forces and stationed around the village. A SAM researcher moved to Al-Buraihi Hospital in the city of Taiz, where the victim received treatment and met her with her husband, Ali Hassan Mahyoub, who said: (My wife was

in front of the door of the house watering her children at sunset that day, so one of the snipers stationed in the site of the fort opposite our house shot her with a bullet hit her in the right thigh, and she fell to the ground. The victim's husband added, I heard my wife's screams, so I went out trying to help her. Nevertheless, I found it difficult because the cars do not reach the village since the Houthis invaded it three years ago as they target any car that can pass it, so I carried my wife on my back to a village adjacent to ours and rented a car from it. Then I took my wife to Al-Buraihi Hospital).

The victim's husband continues, saying: (The sniper stationed at the fortress site is constantly targeting civilians even though there are no armed men in the village. A girl and a woman were killed by the sniper's weapon, and four civilians were wounded earlier).

When the Houthis and Saleh forces took control of the Political Security Organization building in the center of Taiz in April 2015, these forces placed a number of snipers on "shifts" guarding the building where the Political Security Service is located on a high hill in the center of the city and overlooks a number of public streets and crowded population gatherings. SAM has documented a number of victims of attacks by snipers against civilians from this place.

The child, Elham Abdu Rassam Al-Shamiri

"mentally disabled", is one of these victims. She was shot in the back by a sniper's bullet while standing in front of her father's house in Al-Dharbeh neighborhood on Tuesday, July 28, 2015. SAM met the victim's father and other witnesses, and her father said: (I was inside my shop while my daughter Elham was playing with the children, and she wanted to enter the shop. As she approached the door, I heard the sound of a gunshot, and I saw her fall to the ground. Then she got up and entered the shop and fell again. I saw the impact of the injury next to the spine on her back. The father of the victim adds, I hugged my daughter and took her to Al-Hikma Hospital, where she was given first aid and then transferred her to Al-Rawda Hospital. There, the doctors intervened surgically by doing what is necessary. The victim's father went on to say that the direction of the shot was from the Political Security building where the Houthi and Saleh forces' snipers are located since they had previously sniped a number of people in this neighborhood).

She was collecting firewood to help her family cook food, but a sniper affiliated with the Houthi and Saleh forces turned her life into a tragedy by breaking

her legs with one shot. Since her injury on September 24, 2016, the 17-year-old Ibtisam Ahmed Ali is still unable to walk normally, and her father is still taking care of her with treatment, including physical therapy, so that she can walk on her feet.

SAM met the father of the victim and two witnesses from the residents of Al-Muraba'a neighborhood, northwest of Taiz, where the victim lives. Her father said: (My daughter was collecting firewood on the outskirts of our village, and the Houthi sniper, stationed in the Mudrat area, hit her with a bullet that penetrated her right leg and then the left, which led to fractures in the legs and rupture of nerves and arteries. He added, "I took my daughter to Al-Buraihi Hospital, then Al-Thawra Hospital, and Al-Khaleej Hospital. In all these hospitals, doctors subjected her to a number of surgeries in order to repair her legs. She is still suffering from the injury and cannot walk on her feet. The father of the victim adds, my daughter was subjected to physiotherapy in the Gulf Hospital and is still suffering to this day. Her treatment is continuing, but she cannot walk on her feet. We met her father in January 2020).

He was returning to his home, and a sniper targeted him with a bullet in the head. He fell to the ground and stayed about a whole day in the road. No one knew his whereabouts. SAM met the young man, Adnan Ahmed Al-Surori, two years after his injury and he is still suffering from pain. He lost sight in one of his eyes. He said: (About 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2015, I was returning from the market to my house in al-Dhabab. On the way home, one of the snipers shot me with a bullet that entered the left cheek and exited from the front of the head next to the eye. He added, "I fainted in the place until 6:00 a.m. the second day when my brother told me that he had passed by the place and I was in a state of unconsciousness, so he rescued me and took me to Al-Safwa Hospital in Taiz. The victim adds, the doctors performed a number of surgeries for me, but I completely lost vision from my left eye, and the complications of the injury resulted in an increase in epilepsy seizures in my brain. I still take medication on a permanent basis. The victim went on to say that the sniper who targeted me belongs to the Houthi and Saleh forces who are stationed in the Gardens of al-Saleh).

The child Mahdi Sarhan Ibrahim

16 years old, returned back to his hometown after a period of displacement. He was preparing himself to give a radio speech to his fellow students at the school. He did not know that his school had been taken over by a Houthi sniper, and from there came the danger to his life where he met his death by that sniper's bullets. His body was lying in the open for 48 hours.

Mahdi left his hometown in the village of Al-Arish, Sabr Al-Mawadim district, with his family at the beginning of the conflict in 2015. They were displaced to a school in the Al-Arous area where they stayed for more than three years. After the Houthi and Saleh forces were expelled from his village at the end of 2017, Mahdi and his family returned to his village and he continued his education in the village school, but the Houthi forces stormed the village again at the end of February 2019 and were stationed in the school, so Mahdi was sniped and killed by a Houthi fighter.

SAM met the child's father, and he said: (Mahdi was preparing to go to his school on Sunday morning, March 3, 2019, and was preparing to talk to his classmates during the morning assembly. He left the house, but the Houthi forces were faster to occupy the school. The snipers climbed the school without our knowledge. While my son was walking on his way to school, he was hit in the face by a sniper's bullet who was stationed there, and he fell dead. His body remained on the road for about 48 hours. We were unable to retrieve it until after the government forces defeated the Houthi forces).

The brothers, Majed, Aseel and Alaa, sons of Muhammad Massad, (20, 18, 16), respectively, and all of them are socially marginalized "brown-skinned". The first and second were killed on Saturday, August 22, 2015 by a sniper belonging to the Houthi and Saleh forces stationed in the Central Security Camp east of Taiz, and the latter was shot by a sniper two days after the killing of his two brothers.

SAM met with a number of eyewitnesses, and

Akram Abdullah Abdul Fattah

said: (Majid and Aseel were riding on a motorbike and intended to go to visit their aunt in the Kellabah neighborhood. While they were next to Al-Rawda Post office, opposite the Central Security Camp, the two were hit by a gunshot, as the bullet entered Aseel's back, penetrated his body, penetrated into the back of his brother Majed and settled in his stomach. Majed fell off the bike and tried to crawl on his stomach, but another shot hit him in the left incision, so we took the two young men to Al-Rawda Hospital, but Majed had passed away while Aseel died two hours after he was taken to hospital. The witness stated that in this place, about 30 civilians were killed during five months by the snipers of the Houthi and Saleh forces stationed in the Central Security Camp).

SAM also met the victim

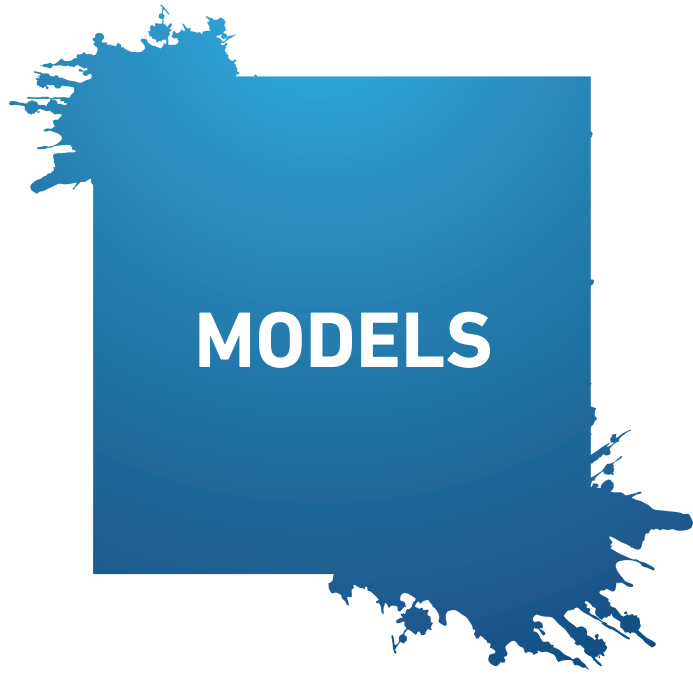
Alaa Muhammad MUSAAD

and he said: (Two days after the killing of my brothers, Majed and Aseel, I decided to travel to the city of Ibb in order to offer my condolences to my father, who resides there. So I left from the side of al-Qasr round at noon on Monday August 24, 2015. While I was walking near Al-Rawda Post Office in the neighborhood of Kellabah, I was hit by a sniper's bullet in my left leg. The direction of the shot was from the Central Security Camp in which the Houthi and Saleh militants are stationed. This shot caused me a nerve tear below the knee, and I was taken to Al Safwa Hospital and the doctors performed a surgical intervention for me).

TOPIC 3:

During the Fight among the Government Forces, the Sniper Weapon Emerged

SAM noticed that the use of sniper weapons by the government forces and armed groups against each other in their conflict which erupted in the center of Taiz from time to time, especially between the forces supported by the Taiz axis and the UAE-backed forces of the Abu Abbas Brigades, with the outbreak of conflict between them in the years 2018 and 2019, it was observed that the two sides used snipers against each other, as well as against the civilian population to a limited extent. SAM documented testimonies confirming this.



MODELS

In the armed conflict between the military factions and armed groups inside the city of Taiz, which erupted from time to time during the years 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, everyone used the weapon of snipers against other parties, and there were many attacks against civilians. In the fighting which broke out between the Abu Abbas Brigades and the Ghazwan Al-Makhlafi gang in the center of Taiz, in July 2017, SAM documented the killing of two civilians due to sniper attacks.

SAM listened to testimonies regarding the killing of Sadeq Al-Mughles and Abdul Fattah Al-Athwary on Friday, July 14, 2017. Al-Mughels, the father of the victim, Sadiq, stated that: (Sadeq was preparing for Friday prayer when we heard a gunshot that penetrated the window of his room and hit Sadeq in his left thigh, which caused him to bleed severely. They were unable to take him to hospital because the gunmen were stationed in one of the buildings next to the house, and they opened fire randomly. Al-Mughels adds: When the shooting calmed down, we tried to help him, but he died. During SAM's inspection of the scene and listening to a number of residents, it became clear that the building from which the bullets were fired was the one where gunmen belonging to Ghazwan Al-Mikhlaifi were stationed).

Sayoun Abdul-Fattah

the son of the victim, Abdul-Fattah Al-Athwari, described the incident of his father's killing, saying: (My father was riding his motorcycle on Friday morning in the lower Tahrir Street opposite the Liberation Tower Hotel, and clashes erupted between gunmen belonging to the Ghazwan Al-Mikhlaifi gang and others affiliated with the Abu Abbas Brigades. My father was shot in the head by a sniper. He added: He fell off his bike and kept bleeding until he died. Passers-by were unable to save him due to the clashes, so when the shooting calmed down, residents pulled the body and put it in the Morgue of Al-Rawda Hospital).

The 11-year-old child, Dua'a Saleh Al-Hamedi

was killed by a sniper while she was playing with her brother in the backyard of her father's house in Al-Nussiriyah neighborhood, on Friday, April 26, 2019, while the government forces were fighting with the UAE-backed Abu Al-Abbas Brigades.

Saleh al-Hamedi, Dua'a's father, spoke about the details of her death due to those clashes, and he said: "My house is located in the Nussiriyah neighborhood, which was an arena for clashes between the Abu al-Abbas Brigades and the Security Committee. Armed men affiliated with Al-Abbas Brigades were stationed in buildings opposite the house. The security committee's gunmen

are holed up next to the neighborhood mosque near the house. While Doa'a was playing with her brother in the yard of the house, she opened the yard door a little and was hit by a sniper's bullet. I took her to Al-Buraihi Hospital, but she died on the way). Although the child's father had stated that the shot was from the direction of the Abu Abbas Brigades militants, the organization did not obtain sufficient evidence to confirm the identification of the source of the shooting, and the cantonment sites of each side of the fighting.

Mrs. Fathia Naji Al-Ba'adani

46 years old, was hit in the head by a sniper attack while she was reviewing her children's lessons at her home in Oqba neighborhood, September 26th Street, on Saturday evening, April 20, 2019. SAM met her husband, Adnan al-Amiri, and he said: (About five o'clock on Saturday evening, my wife was reviewing lessons for my children when a bullet penetrated the window of the room and hit her in the head. He added: The entrance to the shot was from the direction of the Cairo Casel, where the Abu Abbas Brigades' militants are stationed. He adds, I took my wife to Al Safwa Hospital. The doctors took her into the intensive care unit and surgically intervened in order to save her, but she still suffers from that injury).

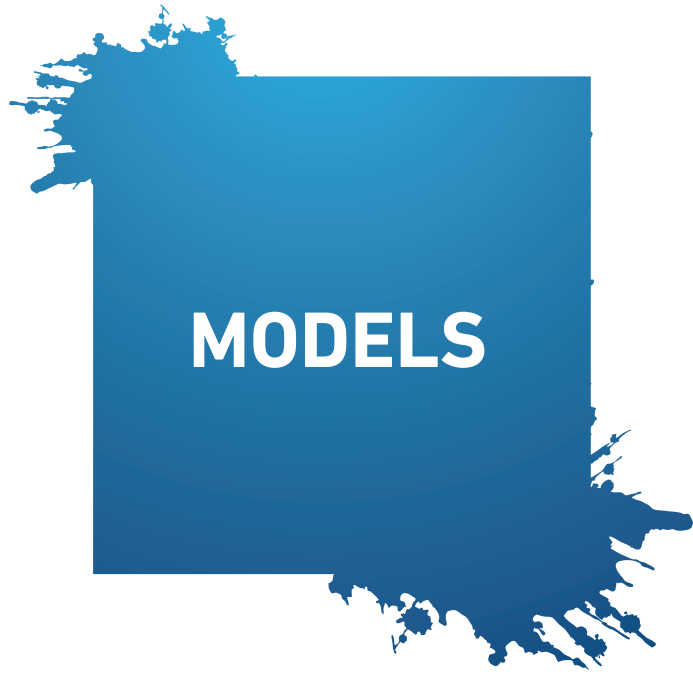
THE FOURTH TOPIC:

Al-Shaqab Area in Taiz .. A Sniper Takes Lives

A rural area that belongs to the Saber Al Mawadim District, one of the districts of Taiz Governorate. It is located on the mountainous sequential slope of Jabal Saber and is approximately 40 km away from the governorate center. The area is witnessing a conflict between government forces and the Houthis and Saleh forces as the latter took control of this area in March 2015 and was able to hold out in it. The area is distinguished by its geographical location overlooking the Taiz-Aden road from the direction of the Khadir district, east of Taiz.

As a result of this control, the battles between the Houthis and Saleh forces on the one hand and the government forces on the other intensified, turning the area into great devastation and massive violations as each side controlled multiple sites in the region. The Houthi forces, including snipers, were stationed in heights overlooking the residents' homes and their grazing and farming areas, from which they launched a number of deadly attacks against civilians.

SAM recorded more than (86) children and women victims of sniper attacks during the reporting period including (7) dead, and (79) wounded. The number of children killed and wounded was (38), and the number of women was (48).



MODELS

Naeem Abdullah Saleh

aged (50), was killed by a Houthi sniper's weapon while preparing food for her children on Sunday morning, January 13, 2019 in Shuhra village, Al Shaqab area.

The organization met a number of its relatives, and Abdul Razzaq Muhammad said: (Early that morning, Naeem went to her kitchen next to the house to cook food for her nine children and her husband, who was injured due to the war. While she was preparing food, she was hit by a sniper's bullet, stationed in al-Salihin hill opposite our village. The bullet penetrated her shoulder and settled in her chest and she died instantly. He added, we gathered and a number of villagers gathered to help her, but we couldn't because of the gunmen were shooting at us, but number of women risked their lives and were able to pull out the victim's body, which we transferred to the morgue of Al-Rawda Hospital in Taiz city).

While she was pegging out the washing on the morning of Wednesday, January 18, 2017, Mrs. Ruziqa Abdul Latif Ahmed (24 years old) was attacked by a sniper who hit her in the leg. SAM met her after being ambulated to Al Safwa Hospital in Taiz. It also met the eyewitness Jamil Abdullah Ahmed, who said: (Ruziqa went out to peg the laundry next to her house in the Al Shaqab area, and she was hit by a gunshot from the direction of Al-Salihin hill where Houthi snipers are stationed, so we took her to Al-Safwa Hospital in the center of Taiz).

The armed conflict among the population has caused many tragedies, and perhaps the conflict among the rural villages is more severe because the villagers are permanently dependent on the sources of livelihood from their farms, fetching water from ponds and basins, grazing their livestock and woodcutting from the mountains. This is the case for the residents of Al Shaqab area. With the protracted conflict in this region, the chances of living are limited.

SAM listened to multiple testimonies about the attacks committed against the residents. Perhaps the story of the two girls

Hamama Najeeb Abdu Saeed

13 years old, and the Rasa'il Samed Al Shaabi, 10 years old, are the most eloquent expression of the tragedy experienced by the residents of this area.

The organization met the father of the little girl, Hamama, and two of those who helped take her to the city of Taiz. Her father said: (I own a water tank next to my house, and it is seen from where the Houthi snipers are stationed

in al-Salihin hill. For fear of my daughter from sniper attacks, I told to her by fetching water from one of my neighbors' tanks as it is not exposed to the sniper. He added, Hamama left the house on Friday morning, January 26, 2018, to fetch water from the tank owned by my neighbor and was hit by a sniper's bullet in the waist). Witness Mustafa Ali Abdu, one of those who participated in saving the girl, added: (After we heard the news of the injury of Hamama, we went to the place to help her, but the sniper stationed in the hill of the righteous kept shooting at us. We pulled her difficultly. Then we took her to hospitals in the city of Taiz, but she died while we were on the way to the city).

As for the little girl, Rasa'il Samed, her tragedy is that she was also displaced with her family from the village of Dar Mazaal to another house in the village of Najd Al Shaqab due to the Houthi and Saleh forces' control of her village. Nevertheless, Rasa'il was not spared from the effects of the war. She was the victim of a sniper attack following those forces as she fetched water from the water tank next to the house they were displaced to.

SAM confirmed the content of a video footage of the girl's father next to her corpse in Al-Rawda Hospital, complaining about what happened to his daughter and the crimes committed by the Houthi and Saleh forces.⁽¹⁾ SAM met her father who said: (Rasa'il is my only child and she is the one who helps us fetch water. My daughter went out on Wednesday morning, March 22, 2017 to bring us water from a tank next to the house. One of the snipers stationed in al-Salihin hill, which is controlled by the Houthis, pointed his gun and fired one bullet at my daughter, which landed in her left cheek. We tried to save her, but she died within minutes of being hit).

(1) The crimes of the Houthi militia and Saleh. March 22, 2017
<https://bit.ly/2RtEqbC>

CHAPTER III:

The Ones Responsible for the Attacks

According to the legal description that applies to sniper attacks, which are described as a war crime, especially with the availability of a number of circumstances surrounding these attacks including that they are of a systematic nature evidenced by the number of civilian casualties who fell in the attacks. In addition to the desire to commit them, incite them and defend their perpetrators, and there are many indications of orders to commit them from the higher commands and those in charge of the fighters.

Accordingly, the organization tried to reach all those responsible for these attacks, but it faced many difficulties, so it tried to focus on the senior leaders of all parties accused of committing these attacks. In addition to the leaders responsible for attacks in any form in Taiz Governorate. SAM made an effort to reach out to the lower commands as well and the direct officials, including snipers, but that too was faced with many difficulties.

TOPIC 1:

Officials in the Alliance of the Houthi and former President Saleh Forces and the De Facto Authority of the Houthis Later.



Abdul Malek Badr al-Din al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi group (Ansar Allah)

He was born in Dhahyan, Saada Governorate, in 1979. He is the youngest son of the spiritual leader of the Houthi movement, Badr al-Din al-Houthi, who was one of the most prominent jurisprudential references in the Zaidi sect in Yemen before the man converted to the Jarudiyah sect. He received a religious education from his father, and it is not known if he obtained a scientific degree in formal education in its three stages. He worked as a personal escort to his brother Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi during his membership in the House of Representatives. After his brother Hussein was killed on September 10, 2004 during the Houthi war with the Yemeni army during the rule of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Abdul Malik assumed the leadership of the group, and his name was mentioned in this capacity during the war rounds in Saada.⁽¹⁾

He continued to lead his group in multiple wars in Al-Jawf, Amran and Hajjah, and in practice took charge of the direction of his group's fighters to invade the capital, Sana'a, and take control of state institutions in September 2014, and he is primarily responsible for all sectors of his armed group where he actually leads his group in its armed conflict with government forces, and in the northern Yemeni border with Saudi forces. According to all the data studied by SAM, he is primarily responsible for the attacks perpetrated by snipers against civilians. His televised speeches often include support, direction, and motivation to fight and mobilize the military against what he describes as mercenaries, referring to the fighters of the government forces and civilians residing in areas under the authority of the Yemeni government.

(1) Al-Jazeera-Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi website - 3/1/2015.
<https://bit.ly/3f01x5J>

The Former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh

After the uprising of Yemeni youth in 2011 against his regime which lasted 33 years, the Arab Gulf states intervened in the formulation of a political settlement between Saleh and the Yemeni opposition, the “Joint Meeting”, according to which Saleh stepped down from power, and handed it over to his deputy, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, in February 2012.⁽²⁾

The forces of the so-called Republican Guard, the Central Security and the intelligence services, which are described as the striking military and security force in the Yemeni army and security, remained loyal to Saleh. After handing over power, Saleh worked to build bridges of communication with the Houthi group, which culminated in the announcement of the two parties’ alliance, despite the group’s opposition to his regime.

During the Houthi forces’ control of Amran governorate, Saleh instructed the sheikhs loyal to him to facilitate the Houthi control of their areas, given that the sheikhs’ influence exceeds the influence of state institutions in those areas. During the Houthi forces’ invasion of the capital, Sana’a, the forces loyal to Saleh, which surrounded the capital, allowed them to pass, and a number of media agencies reported the participation of Saleh’s forces to the Houthis in the fight to control Sana’a.⁽³⁾

The General People’s Congress, headed by Saleh, formed with the Houthi group what they called the Supreme Political Council for the Administration of Yemen after their control of the capital,⁽⁴⁾ and this signature was the most prominent title of the Houthi alliance and former President Saleh. SAM monitored a number of media statements by Saleh urging his supporters to snipe what he called members of ISIS⁽⁵⁾ in Taiz. The man is considered responsible for sniper attacks perpetrated by his forces in partnership with Houthi forces.

Muhammad Ali Abd al-Karim al-Houthi, head of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee

This committee issued the so-called constitutional declaration of the Houthi group in February 2015, four months after the group took control of the capital, Sana’a. The committee granted itself wide powers in managing public affairs, including choosing the National Council and “to take all necessary procedures

(2) France 24. Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi officially receives the presidency from Ali Abdullah Saleh. 27/2/2012 <https://bit.ly/3trPhAf>

(3) Al Jazeera. The Houthis control Yemen and the password is “Saleh” <https://bit.ly/3f31fuK>

(4) Khabr Yemen Agency. In the presence of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a political agreement was signed in Sana’a between the General People’s Congress and Ansar Allah. 7/28/2016 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CiEvaGa6_Q

(5) It was called by the Houthi and Saleh media for all their opponents, and it was often used to cover up attacks against civilians as directed against ISIS.

and measures to protect the sovereignty of the country and ensure its security and stability.”⁽⁶⁾ Muhammad al-Houthi manages the Revolutionary Committee, from which revolutionary committees are branched in the governorates and are headed by supervisors. These supervisors are the ones who actually control all the military and security arrangements in the governorates controlled by the Houthi forces. The man meets with the military leaders, visits the military areas and gives orders and directions.⁽⁷⁾ On this basis, Muhammad al-Houthi is actually responsible for the sniper attacks committed by the Houthi force.



Abu Ali Al-Hakem (Abdullah Yahya Al-Hakim), Head of the Intelligence Service at the Ministry of Defense of the Houthis

The field commander of the Houthi forces since early time during the six wars of Saada, and he led the Houthi forces to invade the capital, Sana’a. In December 2015, the Houthi group appointed him commander of the Fourth Military District, under which a number of governorates fall, including the governorates of Aden and Taiz. In August 2017, he was appointed head of intelligence at the Ministry of Defense. Al-Hakem is held responsible for the sniper attacks perpetrated by his group’s forces, especially the attacks against civilians in Taiz, especially since he served as the de facto commander of the military operations in Taiz. His name was included in the list of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council in April 2015 due to his major role in the invasion of the capital, Sana’a and the control of state institutions.



Abdul-Khaleq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, Commander of the Central Military Region of the Houthi Forces

The younger brother of the leader of the Houthi group, who had a major role in the invasion of the capital, Sana’a, and control of state institutions, the Houthi group appointed him as the commander of the Central Military Region.

(6) Al-Thawra Net. The constitutional declaration to organize the rules of governance during the transitional period. February 6, 2015

<http://althawrah.ye/archives/110280>

(7) Al-Moqae Post (Report) What does the appearance of Muhammad al-Houthi and Abu Ali al-Hakim mean in Taiz? 27 September 2015

<https://almawqaeapost.net/reports/2303>



The man enjoys great influence within the group and its military forces. His name was included in the list of sanctions imposed by the Security Council in its Resolution No. 2216 (April 2015) on Yemeni leaders on charges of obstructing the political settlement in Yemen. Abdul Khaleq is considered one of the leaders responsible for the sniper attacks committed by his group's forces, especially in the Hodeidah governorate, where he took command of the battles after 2017.

Saleh Ali Mohammed Al-Sammad, Former Head of the Houthi Political Council

He comes from the Bani Muadh area, Sahar District, Saada Governorate, northern Yemen. He joined the Houthis from an early age and worked as head of the Houthi political office after 2011. After the group's fighters overran the capital, Sana'a, he was appointed as an advisor to Yemeni President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi. During the formation of the alliance of Houthi and the General People's Congress of the Supreme Political Council, Al-Sammad was chosen as its president ⁽⁸⁾ and he stayed at that location until the Houthis announced



his death in an air strike by the Arab coalition aircraft on Thursday, April 19, 2018.⁽⁹⁾ During his presidency of that council, he issued military decisions to manage combat operations. SAM reviewed a number of speeches the man gave while inciting his group's supporters to fight. He also visited many battles zones including Hodeidah governorate, where he was killed, and by his de facto authority, he is responsible for the sniper attacks committed by the Houthi-Saleh alliance forces.

Mahdi Al-Mashat, President of the Supreme Political Council

He descends to Haidan District, Saada Governorate. He worked within the narrow circle of the Houthi leader in managing military affairs. He was the

(8) Al Manar TV. Announcing the formation of the Supreme Political Council of the Republic of Yemen. August 6, 2016.

<https://almanar.com.lb/550735>

(9) France 24. The Houthis announce the killing of the head of the "political council" in an Arab coalition raid. April 23, 2018

<https://bit.ly/3h9cEMu>

leader of his office. After the invasion of the capital, Sana'a, he represented the Houthis in a number of negotiations. The group appointed him as head of the Supreme Political Council on April 23, 2018, a few days after the killing of Saleh Al-Sammad, and he continues to lead him until now.⁽¹⁰⁾ The man has great authority in managing the military affairs of the Houthis and is responsible, by virtue of his position, for the sniper attacks committed by his group's fighters.



Major General Yahya Muhammad al-Shami

He held many military and civil positions during the era of former President Saleh. The man is described as the engineer of the Houthis' military action to invade the capital, Sana'a. He is one of the group's main references and military advisor as he was appointed as a military advisor to the Supreme Commander of the Houthis in November 2016. The man, due to his position and influence in managing the military file, is considered responsible for the attacks perpetrated by the Houthi-Saleh alliance forces. His death was announced on April 26, 2021 under mysterious circumstances. The Houthi-affiliated Saba News Agency transmitted a telegram of condolences sent by the group's leader, Abdul-Malek al-Houthi, to al-Shami's family on his death and the death of his son Zakaria. SAM did not know the nature of his death and it is likely that he died of the Covid-19.



Tareq Muhammad Abdullah Saleh, Leader of the UAE-backed National Resistance

The nephew of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh commanded the Special Security and the Third Guard Brigade during the rule of his uncle Saleh until his dismissal in April 2012 by a decision of President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi. During the alliance of Houthi-Saleh forces, Tareq actively participated in the training of snipers in the camp of the martyr Hassan al-Mulsi in his hometown of Sanhan District, Sana'a Governorate.⁽¹¹⁾ He also participated in leading many military

(10) Saba Net. Biography of President Mahdi Al-Mashat. September 3, 2020
<https://www.saba.ye/ar/news3107855.htm>

(11) Yementodaychannel in the presence of Brigadier General Tareq Saleh. A sniper battalion and special missions

battles, especially in the areas of Mocha, Khokha and Bab al-Mandab against the forces of the Giants and the Tihama Resistance in 2017.

After the killing of former President Saleh at the hands of his Houthi allies in the capital, Sana'a, in December 2017, Tareq defected from the Houthi forces and was able to flee to the city of Aden. The United Arab Emirates established military forces for him, and he became the leader of them to fight the Houthis in what is known as the West Coast.⁽¹²⁾ Tareq Saleh is considered responsible for many of the attacks launched by the sniper fighters whom he trained and supervised in the fighting sites during the Houthi-Saleh forces alliance. He is also responsible for the sniper attacks carried out by his forces against civilians in the districts of the West Coast of Taiz and a number of districts of Hodeidah governorate during the current fight against the Houthi group.

graduated from the camp of the martyr, Brigadier General Hassan al-Mulsi, 02-15-2017

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUF_FPLk-kY

(12) Al Jazeera. The UAE is working to form special brigades led by Tareq Saleh.5/2/2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eooPQIQADQ>

TOPIC 2:

Officials in the De-Facto Authority of the Houthi Group in Taiz Governorate

Abdul Latif Hammoud Yahiya Al-Mahdi, nicknamed “Abu Nasr Al-Shaath”, Commander of the Fourth Military Region

Al-Mahdi comes from Saada Governorate and has participated with the Houthis in fighting government forces since the six Saada wars. The Supreme Political Council appointed him as commander of the Fourth Military District, succeeding Abdullah Yahiya Al-Hakem in April 2017.⁽¹⁾ He commands and manages military operations in Taiz Governorate, where Taiz is located within the structure of the military region led by Al-Mahdi. He is considered the first person responsible, because of his military position, for the attacks launched by his fighters against civilians in Taiz Governorate, especially the sniper attacks.

Hammoud Ahmed Dahmash, General Staff of the Fourth Military Region’s War

He has served as the commander of the 22nd Mecha Brigade since 2013 by a decision issued by Yemeni President Hadi, and after the Houthi invasion of Taiz he continued to work as the brigade commander receiving orders from the leadership of the Houthi and Saleh forces. The forces of the 22nd Mecha Brigade actively participated in the fighting in Taiz. In April 2017, he was appointed by the Political Council, General Staff of the Fourth Military District. The man is considered ex-officio responsible for the sniper attacks perpetrated by the Houthi-Saleh alliance forces and subsequently Houthi forces against civilians in Taiz.

Mansour Ali Saeed Al-Lakumi, the Former Houthi Supervisor of Taiz

He comes from the village of Bait Al-Lakumi, Maswar Amran. He was the general supervisor of the Houthis in Taiz Governorate from 2014 until February 2020, and he was also appointed as an undersecretary for Taiz Governorate during that period. During his work as the supervisor of the Houthi Revolutionary Committee in Taiz, he had wide powers in managing military affairs. By virtue of his position and authority, he is responsible for the sniper attacks launched

(1) Saba Net. A Republican decision appointing a commander of the fourth military region and a staff of war for the region 25 April 2017
<https://www.saba.ye/ar/news463062.htm>

by his group's fighters against civilians, which caused the deaths of dozens of civilians. Press reports spoke of disputes between him and Amin al-Bahr, the former governor of Taiz, appointed by the Houthis as he was expelled from Taiz and appointed as a member of the Shura Council under the authority of the Houthis⁽²⁾ in February 2020.

Ahmed Abdullah Al-Sharafi, Commander of the Taiz Axis, Appointed by the Houthis

He comes from Dhamar Governorate. He was appointed by the Houthis as the commander of the Taiz Axis. He is directly responsible, by virtue of his position, in supervising the military operations in the governorate and is responsible for the attacks launched by the snipers of the Houthi and Saleh forces against civilians.

Other military figures in Taiz, the most important of which are Brigadier General Muhammad Ali Saeed, commander of the 17th Infantry Brigade appointed by the Houthis, Brigadier Ahmed Saleh Ali al-Qarn, commander of the 22nd Armored Brigade appointed by the Houthis, and Brigadier-General Mansour Mohsen Ahmed Muaijar, commander of the 35th Armored Brigade.

The governors of Taiz appointed by the de facto authority of the Houthi-Saleh alliance, Abdo Muhammad al-Janadi was appointed in November 2015. Major General Amin Ali Abdullah al-Bahr was appointed in October 2018 to succeed Abdo al-Janadi, and he also served as the commander of the Sammad Brigade in Taiz. Colonel Salim Muhammad Numan Mughales was appointed governor of Taiz in February 2020.⁽³⁾ He continued his work until he was dismissed in April 2021. After that he was appointed Minister of Civil Service in the Houthi government. According to several testimonies obtained by SAM, al-Janadi and al-Bahr contributed extensively to the military mobilization. Al-Bahr also served as the commander of the Al-Sammad Brigade in Taiz, while Colonel Salim Mughales enjoyed great powers in the combat aspects including issuing

(2) Yemeni news. Decision appointing the council as governor of Taiz, February 17, 2020
<https://alkhabaralyemeni.net/2020/02/17/78213/>

(3) al-Masirah. Two Republican decisions were issued appointing a governor for Taiz and two members of the Shura Council. February 18, 2020
<https://www.almasirah.net/post/150158/>

TOPIC 3:

Officials in the Internationally Recognized Yemeni Government



Muhammad Ali Al-Maqdashi (Minister of Defense)

He was appointed to this position in March 2018 more three years after the Houthis had detained former Defense Minister Mahmoud Al-Subaihi, as the position of the Ministry of Defense remained vacant until the appointment of Al-

Maqdashi filled it.⁽¹⁾ Prior to his appointment to this position, he held the chief of staff of the Yemeni army since May 2015. The man leads the Ministry of Defense, and is responsible, ex officio, for issuing directives related to the management of battles for government forces. The commanders of the government's military districts are under his authority. As he represents an executive function in the leadership of government forces, he is responsible for the sniper attacks launched by his forces against civilians.

"SAM" had asked the Yemeni Ministry of Defense about the procedures it had taken to investigate and bring the perpetrators of the sniper attacks to justice, and although the ministry had responded that it referred those found to have violated the principles of international humanitarian law to the judiciary, it did not support this statement with evidence and facts on the ground.

(1) CNN Arabic. Lieutenant-General Al-Maqdashi appointed Minister of Defense. 8 November 2018
<https://arabic.cnn.com/middle-east/article/2018/11/08/yemen-army>



Taher Ali Aidha al-Aqili, Abdullah Salem Ali al-Nakh'i and Saghir Hammoud bin Aziz (staff of government forces)

Chiefs of Staff of the Yemeni Army since September 2017, where Taher Al-Aqili was appointed Chief of Staff of the Army⁽²⁾ and continued in his position until November 8, 2018, and Abdullah Al-Nakhei⁽³⁾ was appointed in his place, who continued in this position until February 28, 2020. Saghir Hammoud bin Aziz⁽⁴⁾ was appointed and he remains in his position at the time of writing the report. The Army Staff Officer is considered the second man in the Ministry of Defense, and he is the actual commander of the military forces. Furthermore, aforementioned have great powers in directing battles, and by virtue of their positions they are responsible for the sniper attacks launched by government forces against civilians.

(2) RT Appointment of Taher Al-Aqili as Chief of Staff of the Yemeni Army. September 4, 2017
<https://bit.ly/2R2CiYz>

(3) A previous reference

(4) Al-Khabar Post. Appointment of Saghir bin Aziz as Chief of Staff. February 28, 2020
<https://www.alkhabarpost.com/news/6764>

TOPIC 4:

Government Officials within the Taiz Governorate

Khaled Qassem Fadel (Commander of the Taiz Axis)

He was appointed to this position in November 2019 and is still in his position until the writing the report and previously worked in the same position from August 3, 2016 until December 31, 2018.

His first tenure witnessed armed clashes, both between the government forces he runs on the one hand, and between terrorist organizations, and the Abu Abbas Brigades of the UAE-backed 35th Armored Brigade on the other. His tenure also witnessed bloody clashes and security incidents between gangs and armed groups in the center of the city of Taiz. In all these clashes, all sides used sniper weapons and committed a number of attacks against civilians. The man is responsible for attacks launched by government forces, especially those that took place during the armed conflict between government forces and between them and armed groups including extremists.

Samir Abdullah Al-Sabri (Former Commander of the Taiz Axis)

He served as the commander of the Taiz axis since December 31, 2018 until early November 2019. His tenure witnessed an intensified conflict between government forces on the one hand and the UAE-backed Abu Abbas brigades on the other, most of which were concentrated in the city center. Both sides used snipers to a limited extent, and attacks were launched against civilians. SAM recorded a number of casualties. Al-Sabri bears responsibility for these attacks as he was a commander of government forces in the governorate.

Adel Abdo Farea Al-Dhubhani - nicknamed Abu Al-Abbas (Commander of the Abu Al-Abbas Brigades)

He has been running popular groups to fight the Houthi and Saleh forces since 2015. After the integration of the fighters of what is known as popular resistance into the government forces, his armed members were integrated into the structure of the 35th Armored Brigade. However, according to a previous statement by the commander of the 35th Armored Brigade, the Abu al-Abbas Brigades (... are affiliated

with the 35th Brigade, but so far it has not been fully integrated into the 35th Brigade since it is included the 35th Armored Brigade in terms of payroll but is independent in its decision, leadership and support).⁽¹⁾ According to testimonies heard by SAM, the Abu al-Abbas Brigades received support from the United Arab Emirates and began to exercise effective authority over the areas it controls, equal to the authority of government forces. SAM also recently reported to Ali al-Ma'amari, the former governor of Taiz that the UAE deals directly with the Abu al-Abbas Brigades and supports Abu al-Abbas personally.⁽²⁾

Accordingly, the frictions between these brigades and other armed groups began early in 2016, and developed into violent fighting between the brigades and government forces in the years 2018 and 2019, and both sides used sniper attacks against each other and against civilians. "SAM" recorded incidents of civilian casualties who were killed by sniper attacks during the fighting. Accordingly, the Abu al-Abbas Brigades and its leader, Adel al-Dhubhani, are responsible for the sniper attacks launched by his battalions' forces against civilians.

(1) Post site. In an interview with Adnan al-Hammadi: We do not implement any foreign agenda, and the Abu al-Abbas Brigades have not been fully integrated into the 35th (2-2) Brigade. October 23, 2017 <https://almawqeaapost.net/interviews/24252>

(2) American University of Beirut. During a lecture given by Al-Maamari at the American University of Beirut in October 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7PuffFulTg>

TOPIC 5:

Officials in the Emirati-backed Forces

Aidarous Qassem Al-Zubaidi (President of the Southern Transitional Council)

The council was formed in May 2017 with Emirati support after the decision to remove al-Zubaidi from his position as governor of Aden. The Security Belt Forces are considered the military arm of this council to achieve the goals it set for itself in the independence of southern Yemen from its north.

The man is de facto responsible for the sniper attacks launched by the Security Belt forces against civilians, especially in the clashes that took place between these forces and government forces in the city of Aden during 2018, as well as the attacks launched by his forces during their ongoing war with government forces in Abyan governorate.

Abdul Rahman Sheikh Al Yafei

A Salafi cleric, who was entrusted with the task of establishing the Security Belt Forces in the city of Aden, and is considered the actual leader of these forces. He is also a member of the Supreme Commission of the Southern Transitional Council and was chosen among the delegation of the Transitional Council

in the Riyadh negotiations with the Yemeni government. Working in the shadows often, he had prominent roles in the armed clashes his forces fought with government forces in 2018. He is considered the actual engineer of the fighting that is currently taking place between his forces and government forces in Abyan governorate since early 2019, and by virtue of his position, he is considered responsible for the attacks launched by his forces against civilians.

Wadhah Omar Abdul Aziz Al Subaihi

He is considered the field commander of the Security Belt Forces in the city of Aden since its formation until September 2019 when these forces made changes in their leadership, so he was appointed commander of the Security Belt Forces in Lahj Governorate. The man is considered responsible for sniper attacks perpetrated by his forces against civilians, especially in the fighting that erupted between them and government forces in the city of Aden in 2018.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Houthi armed group

- Stop all forms of sniper attacks against civilians.
- Adhere to the rules of international humanitarian law including the distinction between combatants and civilians in all attacks launched by sniper fighters.
- Stop the use of all offensive weapons against the civilian population as they cause massive damage, disabilities as well as terrorizing the population.
- Withdraw all sniper fighters from all sites, buildings, and mountains surrounding neighborhoods and residential communities.
- Stop smuggling offensive weapons, including sniper weapons.
- Fair compensation for all victims of sniper attacks.

To the Yemeni government forces

- Stop all forms of attacks launched by sniper fighters against civilians.
- Adhere to the rules of international law including the distinction between civilians and war fighters.
- Open a comprehensive investigation into the attacks documented in this report including those for which government forces are responsible, especially the ones in the city of Taiz.
- Dismiss all leaders accused of committing human rights violations from their jobs.

To the Southern Transitional Council and the UAE-backed forces

- Stop all forms of attacks against civilians.
- Stop the use of offensive weapons, including sniper weapons.

To the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

- Stop supplying government forces and other military formations (the UAE-backed forces) with sniper weapons.
- Work to end the conflict between government forces and the forces of the Southern Transitional Council.
- Work on everything that would not undermine peace and security in Yemen, and to abide by the rules of international law related to respect for states, non-interference in their affairs, and a moral responsibility towards Yemeni citizens.

To the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sultanate of Oman

- Stop smuggling all weapons including sniper weapons, to the Houthi group.
- Commitment to all UN resolutions related to Yemen, especially with regard to preventing the supply of arms to the parties to the conflict.
- The Sultanate of Oman should take all effective measures to stop the smuggling of weapons to the Houthi group through its lands and territorial waters including offensive and sniper arms and to prevent the use of its lands, waters and ports as a smuggling point for arms.
- Accountability of all those involved in smuggling weapons to the Houthi group.
- Work on everything that would not undermine peace and security in Yemen and abide by the rules of international law related to respect for states, non-interference in their affairs, and a moral responsibility towards Yemeni citizens.

To the UN Security Council and its permanent members

- Take serious and effective steps that would maintain peace and security in Yemen. Force all local and regional parties associated with them to stop attacks against civilians and to stop all forms of support provided to armed groups.
- Refer Yemen's file to the International Criminal Court to investigate all forms of crimes committed by the parties to the conflict, which fall within its mandate to search, investigate and hold those responsible to account.



SNIPER HORROR

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AUGUST 2021



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