

List of Issues addressed to the Southern Transitional Council by the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/RES/ 45/15

I. Introduction

The United Nations Human Rights Council, in its resolution (A/HRC/RES/45/15) of 6 October 2020 renewing the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen (GEE), again “[e]ncourages all parties to the armed conflict in Yemen to extend full and unfettered access and cooperation to the Group [...]”

Noting that the inability to visit Aden seriously curtails its ability to fully execute its mandate, the GEE prepared the below list of issues pertaining to the Southern Transitional Council (STC). The GEE takes this opportunity to respectfully bring to the attention of the STC that it has yet to receive responses to the list of issues sent by the GEE on 18 June 2020 and would welcome responses to this list.

The GEE respectfully requests the STC to address the queries detailed herein. Responses will be included in the Group of Experts’ report to the Human Rights Council, with the exception of any information that the STC requests to remain confidential.

The GEE would be grateful to receive replies no later than 25 August 2021. In addition, the GEE renews its request to the STC to receive any other submissions that the STC may wish to present.

II. List of issues to be addressed by the STC

A. Implementation of GEE Recommendations

1. The GEE report of 28 September 2020 contains findings of fact and recommendations to the parties to the conflict in Yemen. Please describe the steps taken to investigate cases described in the GEE report, to hold perpetrators to account, to prevent recurrence, and to implement the GEE’s recommendations.

B. Military structure

2. Please share with the GEE your understanding of the command and control that the STC and individual members of the STC have over the Security Belt forces, Shabwah Elite forces, the Hadrawmi Elite forces and the Southern Resistance and what support these forces receive from the UAE.
3. On 25 June 2021, the President of the Southern Transitional Council issued decrees, including the appointment of a new commander for the Logistic and Support brigades, directing them to transfer outside Aden to operate under the umbrella of the Ministry of Defence. In addition, the Security Belt Forces were directed to carry out security and police tasks under the umbrella of the Ministry of Interior. Please inform the GEE if these decrees were adopted with the agreement of the Government of Yemen? If yes, please provide more details.

C. Detention

4. The GEE has received allegations that in 2020, human rights defenders, including journalists, have been detained for extended periods of time incommunicado, without formal legal proceedings, forcibly disappeared, and/or subjected to torture and ill-treatment in Aden

Governorate. Please share with the GEE your understanding of these events, with any documents you may deem relevant.

5. The GEE has raised concerns and continue to receive allegations that between 2017 and 2021 individuals were detained without formal legal proceedings, forcibly disappeared, and/or subjected to torture and ill-treatment in unofficial detention facilities under the control of Security Belt and Shabwah Elite forces in Aden, Abyan, Hadramout, and Shabwah Governorates. Please share with the GEE your understanding of these events, with any documents you may deem relevant.

D. Gender based violence (GBV)

6. The GEE raised concerns in its last report of 28 September 2020 and the accompanying Conference Room Paper that the actions of the parties were exacerbating gender inequality, increasing GBV, and severely undermining the fundamental rights and freedoms of women and girls. Please describe the steps taken to investigate the GEE's concerns and protect and advance women's and girls' fundamental rights and freedoms. Please share with the GEE your version of events related to ongoing reports, any documents you may deem relevant.
7. The GEE raised concerns in its last report of 28 September 2020 and the accompanying Conference Room Paper, and has continued to receive reports, of the parties targeting women who are human rights defenders and women's human rights defenders. Please describe any steps taken to investigate the GEEs' concerns, to hold perpetrators to account, and to prevent recurrence. Please share with the GEE your version of events related to ongoing reports, any documents you may deem relevant.
8. The GEE raised concerns in its last report of 28 September 2020 and the accompanying Conference Room Paper of the Security Belt perpetrating sexual violence against migrant and refugee women, girls, men and boys. Please describe any steps taken to investigate the GEEs' concerns, to hold perpetrators to account, and to prevent recurrence. Please share with the GEE your version of events and any documents you may deem relevant.

E. Freedom of the press

9. The GEE has also received allegations that authorities in the South have detained journalists, stormed media outlets and banned, the publication and circulation of all independent news outlets. Please share with the GEE your understanding of these events, any documents you may deem relevant.