

## **[TRANSLATION FROM ARABIC]**

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

### **A Statement of Solidarity from Tribes of Yemen**

We, the sheikhs and elders of the various Yemeni tribes, have been following with interest and great pain all the repercussions of the war and conflict in Yemen, which have led Yemen to this unfortunate condition, in which the foundations of political, economic and social life have been targeted. The tribes in Yemen have not been immune from these conflicts, given that we have ever been the target of attempts to marginalize us and encroach on our values, traditions, and ancestry. We, therefore, believe that the evident violation of the rights of the most vulnerable individuals, groups and sects compel the Yemeni tribes to face the historical responsibility of preserving their values and principles, founded on defending the oppressed.

We, moreover, regret that this conflict has reached [the point of] targeting and suppressing the many social groups, entities and religious minorities that have been living in Yemen for many centuries and which practiced their religion freely and with the protection of all the regimes that have successively ruled Yemen throughout the ages, while the tribal values and customs played their great role in protecting these religious minorities, especially during the internal and external conflicts.

Therefore, we, the sheikhs and elders of Yemen, condemn any arbitrary assault on any Yemeni citizen under the pretext of religious or ethnic difference, and we consider any harassment of any individual, sect or group a shameful act and a disregarding of the divine laws, the Yemeni laws and the tribal customs, and it places on our shoulders the responsibility of defending the oppressed and downtrodden of any of the Yemeni tribes.

We affirm that what the followers of the Bahá'í Faith have been exposed to during the recent years contradicts all divine and applicable laws and is in conflict with our tribal customs and traditions that have embraced and coexisted with the various religious beliefs throughout its long history. This coexistence was an essential feature of the Yemeni society with its inherent values, especially those of the Yemeni tribes, which are distinguished for their culture and values.

Additionally, we affirm that the raid on the homes of our brethren, the Bahá'ís in Sanaa, last month, while blatantly overlooking the fact that they are Yemeni citizens belonging to various Yemeni tribes, and including a number of women, is considered a violation of the laws of the country and a shameful act according to the tribal customs. The sons of the Yemeni tribes cannot watch in silence, as their sons and daughters are being kidnapped from inside their homes, and when their rights are being violated and diminished for nothing more than [the fact] that they have their own religious belief—when this is their right.

We therefore renew our call to all the sheikhs, leaders and members of the Yemeni tribes to adhere to the values and customs of the authentic Yemeni tribes and to declare total solidarity with any Yemeni that seeks their help; we warn against touching them, we demand the release of

the abducted [Yemenis] who are members of the Bahá'í Faith, and [we call] for the respect of their right to practice their Faith.

We, moreover, appeal to the international and regional communities, with the United Nations at their forefront, to adhere to their humanitarian duty by defending and standing with the Yemeni Bahá'ís who are detained in the Houthi prisons—those who have no fault other than their belief in what they consider their salvation in this world and in the next.

And we call on the de facto government in the regions under Houthi control (*Ansaru'llah*) to immediately release the Bahá'í detainees and to respect their right to believe in whatever religion they choose, for the Lord of Mankind will judge us all. This is what we had called for in the past, when the Houthis themselves were experiencing persecution, and they should not now inflict upon others what they suffered in the past, as it does not beseem us as Yemenis to repeat the mistakes of the past.

We beseech the Almighty God for security and stability to prevail in our beloved Yemen and for peace to prevail in our good country.