

**Ms Arwa Othman, human rights activist and former government minister, addressed the Yemen National Security Office regarding the arrest of 60 people on 10 August 2016 as follows [provisional translation]:**

National Security - What function do you have today? The country is in flames from the war and you have forgotten your duties and raided an educational gathering for the youth which had just the same goals as those espoused in the civics text books your children study at school.

Has your duty been changed from that of keeping the people safe and alleviating the miseries of war to being a force of suppression? You are no better than the terrorist groups, who claim to guard the Faith in the name of virtue and pry into people's thoughts, suppress their freedoms and terrorize those who have opinions, ideology, religion and beliefs different from your own?

The children, youth and women who you arrested are not an enemy on whom you need to declare war and imprison, in violation of their rights—especially children's rights. What evidence did you find in among the paper clippings of paper and crayons that a crime had been committed?

What threat prompted you to enter a community building as if it was hosting a terrorist cell that was threatening public safety and the country's sovereignty? What military camps did you discover in the memories of each child, woman and teenager? What sleeping cells of religious and sectarian sedition, working for the interest of the enemies of Yemen, did you find in those civilized surroundings?

You committed a serious crime when you arrested children, women and youth without a warrant or any justification. You have broken the law and transgressed the Yemeni cultural obligation to leave women unmolested. What has come over you that you have arrested them? Their children are suffering from bereavement and loss! Some of those children are infants! What has happened to you and to your honor, National Security?

Regrettably, such behavior on the part of the National Security Office is nothing new, for it arrested and deported Bahá'ís in 2008, just as they treated the Yemeni Jews.