

Yemen: Human Rights Organizations Warn of a Humanitarian Catastrophe in Taiz and Call for the Protection of Civilians and Lifting the Siege

The undersigned human rights organizations express their **deep concern** over the alarming deterioration of the humanitarian situation in **Taiz Governorate**, as a result of the **continued siege and restrictions** imposed on the movement of civilians and the closure of key roads. This comes alongside **ongoing military escalation**, including indiscriminate shelling in residential areas, causing civilian casualties.

The organizations warn of the serious repercussions of these practices on the continuity of access to essential and medical supplies and the movement of food and fuel, which has resulted in **rising prices of basic commodities**, reduced purchasing power, and heightened **food insecurity**. They also highlight the increased risks to **health facilities and water stations**, which threatens the provision of health services, water and sanitation.

Available data indicate that the population in Taiz Governorate is approximately **4.35 million people**, including large numbers of **internally displaced persons**. Current estimates reveal a **dire humanitarian situation**, with serious gaps in basic needs. The organizations emphasize that the continued closure of roads and restrictions on the movement of people and goods have prevented the delivery of vital services and have disproportionately affected **children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities**, placing them at greater risk.

The organizations stress that protecting civilians and ensuring their access to food, water, health care, and essential medicines is a **legal and humanitarian obligation** binding on all parties to the conflict, in accordance with **international humanitarian law**. The deliberate targeting of civilians constitutes a **war crime**, and the failure to meet their essential needs may amount to **collective punishment**. The organizations call on all parties to allow unimpeded and sustained access for humanitarian assistance, without unjustified obstacles.

Based on the above, the undersigned organizations call upon all relevant parties to take the following urgent measures:

-  Immediately **lift all restrictions on movement and open all main and subsidiary roads** to ensure the safe passage of civilians, and to allow for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the supplies they need for survival.
-  Ensure the **freedom of movement for civilians**, including the uninterrupted flow of food, fuel and medical supplies, and allow humanitarian relief to reach all areas without unjustified obstacles.
-  Call on the Yemeni authorities and local authorities to develop and implement an **emergency plan** to secure the continued operation of hospitals, water networks and health services, with priority support for the most vulnerable groups.
-  Urge the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and international and regional donor countries to **intensify their humanitarian intervention**, assess urgent needs, and provide adequate funding to ensure the delivery of life-saving assistance in a safe and organized manner.
-  Call on the UN Human Rights Council and relevant UN mechanisms to **investigate** alleged violations related to the siege, military operations, and the obstruction of relief, **hold those responsible to account**, and ensure that these practices are qualified as serious violations of international humanitarian law, with accountability for those responsible.

The undersigned organizations emphasize that the continued suffering of civilians in Taiz will not be tolerated, and they call on **all parties to the conflict** to prioritize the protection of the population and to take concrete steps to address their needs.

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