



26th session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 6 – Adoption of the UPR outcome of Yemen
19 June 2014

Thank you Mr. President,

Human Rights Watch has documented the lack of effective accountability processes to address past human rights violations and numerous attacks on journalists, particularly those trying to write about government corruption at all levels. Human Rights Watch also has documented government forces' use of landmines in 2011, a serious violation of Yemen's obligations to destroy all landmine caches and refrain from their use in all circumstances.

We welcome Yemen's acceptance of recommendations to ratify the Rome Statute and to establish a commission of inquiry to examine the violations committed during the uprising of 2011. We are concerned however that since an investigation committee was established by presidential decree in September 2012, the members of this committee have not yet been appointed. We urge Yemen to nominate the members of this investigation committee without delay, to look into the human rights violations associated with the 2011 popular uprising. Yemen's parliament should also pass a transitional justice law that meets international standards with urgency. The failure of such steps should steer the Human Rights Council to consider how to respond to the blatant need for accountability for grave violations committed in Yemen. We also welcome Yemen's commitment to establish a national human rights institution meeting the Paris Principles, and call upon Yemen's parliament to pass the bill establishing the body, which is currently pending passage.

Yemen has accepted several UPR recommendations pertaining to the rights of children and women, including to put in place a minimum age of marriage, as well as to amend the personal status law to bring it into conformity with international standards, which represent two very positive steps. We hope that both these legislative changes will happen promptly, and call on the cabinet to pass immediately the Child Rights Bill, which enshrines a minimum age of 18 for marriage.

[Finally we welcome Yemen's commitment to put in place a moratorium on the death penalty. After the recent positive step to put an end to the application of the juvenile death penalty, this represents a very positive step towards Yemen joining the growing majority of abolitionist states.] / [Finally we regret Yemen's rejection of the recommendation to put in place a moratorium on the death penalty. In spite of the recent positive measures to put an end to the application of the juvenile death penalty in the country, Yemen's high number of executions over the past year reflect one of the world's worst records.]