Yemen | Joint Letter Calls for the Immediate and Unconditional Release of Journalist Naseh Shaker

Letter · Yemen · 17 December 2025

HuMENA joined a joint letter addressed to President Rashad al-Alimi and Vice President Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Yemeni journalist Naseh Shaker. The letter raises concerns about enforced disappearance, unofficial detention sites, and due process violations, and urges the authorities in Aden to uphold Yemen's obligations under international human rights law and protect independent journalism.

December 17, 2025

Mr. Rashad al-Alimi
President of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council (PLC)

Mr. Aidarus al-Zoubaidi
Vice President of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council (PLC)
President of the Southern Transitional Council (STC)
Aden, Yemen

Re: Continued detention of Yemeni journalist Naseh Shaker for over two years

We, the undersigned organizations, write to respectfully urge the Yemeni authorities in Aden, represented by the internationally recognized government led by the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and the de facto authority of the Southern Transitional Council (STC), to immediately and unconditionally release Yemeni freelance journalist Naseh Shaker, who has now spent more than two years in detention.

On November 21, 2023, Mr. Shaker was scheduled to travel to Beirut to attend a Hostile Environment and First Aid Training course organized by the Samir Kassir Foundation. He last communicated with his family on November 19, after traveling overnight from his home in Sanaa to Aden to catch his flight. He never arrived at the training and has been subjected to enforced disappearance since that time, as the authorities have refused to reveal his whereabouts when asked.

Repeated inquiries by his family, legal representatives, and local and international organizations went unanswered until February 2025, when a released detainee informed (PDF) the family that Mr. Shaker was being held at al-Nasr Brigade's prison, an STC-affiliated Security Belt Forces facility in Aden that serves as an unofficial detention center. He was later transferred to the notorious Beir Ahmed prison.

The released detainee also informed (PDF) the family that Shaker is being tried by the Specialized Criminal Appeals Prosecution in Aden, which, according to official charging documents reviewed by the Committee to Protect Journalists, has accused him of "using his status as a journalist and local and international media outlets to spread false news, incite against public order, harm national interests, and provide media support to the Houthi group."

These accusations are wholly inconsistent with Mr. Shaker's professional record and the editorial standards of the internationally recognized media outlets to which he contributes. These include the U.S. Congress–funded international broadcaster Voice of America, the U.S.-based Middle East news platform Al-Monitor, and the U.K.-based media outlet The New Arab, the London-based news website Middle East Eye, as well as Al-Jazeera English. He has also provided expert analysis on CNN, and his work has been published in the online magazine of the DC think tank Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft.

Mr. Shaker's continued imprisonment, the lack of transparency surrounding his detention, and the serious due-process concerns raised by his case violate Yemen's obligations under international human rights law and undermine broader efforts to restore stability and public trust in state institutions. His immediate release would demonstrate a meaningful commitment to justice, rule of law, and the protection of independent journalism.

We respectfully call on your offices to:

1. Release Naseh Shaker immediately and unconditionally, along with all other arbitrarily detained journalists.
2. Ensure he receives urgent medical care and full access to his family and legal representatives.
3. End the use of unofficial detention facilities, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearance, and ensure all detentions comply with Yemeni and international law.
4. Affirm that journalists may work freely and without fear of enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest, or retaliation.

As Yemen continues to navigate a critical political moment, independent journalists like Mr. Shaker play an essential role in informing the public and the international community. His safe return to his family and his profession is both necessary and long overdue.

Signatures:

1- Committee to Protect Journalists

2- Yemeni Journalists Syndicate

3- Law and Democracy Support Foundation (LDSF)

4- Rory Peck Trust

5- Article 19

6- Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory (YMFO)

7- Freedom House

8- Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)

9- IFEX

10- The National Organization of Yemeni Reporters SADA

11- DAWN

12- Samir Kassir Foundation

13- SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties

1. CIVICUS

15- Robert and Ethel Kennedy Human Rights Center

16- International Federation of Journalists – IFJ

17- Human Rights Watch

18- HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement

19- American Center for Justice

20- Media village for development and Information

21- Women Journalists Without Chains (WJWC)

22- Mwatana for Human Rights

23 – International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute

24- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

25- Alkarama for human rights – Geneva

26- Dameer Foundation for Human Rights

27-Abductees ' Mothers Association

28- Rights Radar for Human Rights

29-Defense Foundation for Rights and Freedom

30- Bahth Foundation for Development and Human Rights

31- Musawah Organization for Rights and Freedoms

32- Wujoh Foundation for Media and Development

33- Mansa Foundation for Media and Development Studies

34- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

1. World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

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