

26 January 2016

Yemen – Ali Al-Dailami physically assaulted and threatened by Houthi-backed authorities

On 25 January, members of the Houthi-backed authorities physically assaulted and threatened human rights defender Mr **Ali Al-Dailami** near a checkpoint outside the main gates of the Yemen Ministry of Interior in Sana'a.

[Ali Al-Dailami](#) is the General Coordinator of the **Yemen Organization for Defending of Rights and Democratic Freedoms**. This is a non-governmental organisation working at local and regional levels to monitor and document human rights violations such as enforced disappearances, torture, political arrests, discrimination, unfair trials, and trials which violate the Yemeni constitution.

In the early morning of 25 January, Ali Al-Dailami was driving to work when he passed through a checkpoint set up outside the Ministry of Interior in Sana'a by Houthi-backed authorities who currently have control over certain regions in Yemen, including Sana'a. As the human rights defender crossed the checkpoint he heard shouting and saw that one of the armed personnel manning the checkpoint was running after his car. Ali Al-Dailami immediately stopped his car, opened his window and asked what was the problem. Without being given an answer, a member of the Houthi-backed authorities appeared in plain clothes holding a two-way radio receiver and started to shout profanities at the human rights defender. The official then opened the car door of Ali Al-Dailami's car and pulled him out before starting to beat him repeatedly on the chest. The human rights defender was then threatened with detention and was told that he should expect "fear as he never knew existed." Another member of the Houthi-back authorities then approached – also wearing civilian clothes – and claimed he was from the "Jamal Jamil security division" and proceeded to curse at Ali Al-Dailami.

The human rights defender was then beaten for approximately 30 minutes, resulting in injuries to his chest. When asked why he was being beaten, members of the Houthi-backed authorities accused Ali Al-Dailami of shouting at them near the same checkpoint two weeks previously, telling them to respect women when they passed through the checkpoint. The human rights defender responded that no such incident occurred.

Ali Al-Dailami has suffered repeated instances of harassment over the last number of years due to his legitimate human rights work. On 25 August 2014, unknown gunmen shot at the his car while the vehicle was parked in front of his house in Tabari, Old Sana'a. Earlier that year on 31 March 2014, Ali Al-Dailami was detained in San'aa airport for several hours and prohibited from traveling. Ali Al-Dailami had been intending to participate in a conference in Jordan, where he was to be the guest of the League of Arab States, the United Nations, Columbia University, and Al-Karama foundation.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the beating of Ali Al-Dailami and is concerned for his health and physical well-being.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Yemen to:

1. Ensure the personal safety and security of Ali Al-Dailami as Front Line Defenders believes that his

assault is solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;

2. Carry out an independent, impartial and prompt investigation into the physical assault of Ali Al-Dailami;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Yemen are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.