

SANA'A (Anadolu) – Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has called on Yemen's warring sides to extend a UN-brokered cease-fire and provide protection to civilians in the country amid the Saudi-led war. "It is now just over a month since the expiry of a UN-mediated truce in Yemen that started on 2 April, and we are gravely concerned for the safety and security of civilians," OHCHR spokesman Jeremy Laurence told reporters. He said the OHCHR documented "loss of life and injuries from attacks and shelling on civilian areas." The spokesman called on Yemen's warring parties "to facilitate the access of humanitarian relief organizations to populations in need and to facilitate civilian access to humanitarian and life-saving services."

There is enough light for one who wants to see.
It is wiser to abstain than to repent.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

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Massive March in Jordan in Support of Palestine Resistance

AMMAN (MEMO) – Thousands of Jordanians have attended a massive march organized by the Islamic movement in Amman to show support for Palestinian resistance in the occupied West Bank, Quds Press reported.

The march marked the 105th anniversary of the British Balfour Declaration, which promised to establish a state for Zionists on the land of Palestine.

Marchers condemned the Balfour Declaration and deplored Arab and international indifference towards the Palestinian cause, Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

They also condemned the disregard of the daily aggression carried out by the occupation forces and settlers against Palestinians, their properties and holy sites.

Quds Press reported that the organizers called the march "Gratitude to the Lions of the West Bank and Martyrs."



Jordanians gather for a demonstration in solidarity with Palestinians on November 4, 2022 in Amman, Jordan.

The marchers urged the government of Jordan to cut its relations with the Zionist regime, stressing that this was the time to show solidarity with Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Meanwhile, they expressed their

solidarity with the Palestinian resistance in Gaza and the residents of the besieged coastal enclave.

The organizers of the march expressed that the march intended to send a message of support and solidarity to the Palestinians in Gaza,

Al-Khalil, Nablus, Jenin, Al-Quds and all Palestinian cities subjected to "daily brutal Israeli attacks".

Muslim Brotherhood observer-general in Jordan, Abdul Hamid al-Thneibat, said, "This march reflects the rejection by the Jordanian people of the recognition of the legality of the Balfour Declaration and the legitimacy of its outcome – the creation of the occupation state."

Al-Thneibat added, "Palestine is an Islamic and Arab country and will remain the same forever."

The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement has strongly denounced Britain's 1917 Balfour Declaration, which set the stage for the occupation of Palestine, stressing that Palestinians will remain adherent to their national rights and will continue to defend them until full liberation of their territories from the clutches of the occupying regime.

Bahraini Activists Urge Pope to Highlight Regime Abuses in Bahrain Trip



Bahraini security forces fire at anti-regime protesters.

RIFFA (Dispatches) – Relatives of Bahraini political prisoners have welcomed Pope Francis' call for the death penalty to be repealed and human rights assured in the kingdom where the opposition accuses the ruling family of discriminating against the Shia-majority population.

But they also said they hoped the pontiff would use the remainder of his four-day visit to further highlight the plight of the inmates, including through visiting families of death row inmates and even prisoners themselves.

"There is an urgent need for the Pope to continue pressuring towards ending human rights violations," Ali Mushaima, Bahraini human rights activist and son of an imprisoned Bahraini opposition leader Hasan Mushaima, told Middle East Eye on Friday.

"I previously requested the Pope meet with my father in prison and demand the immediate release of all political prisoners and I hope that this will happen during the upcoming days."

The Pope's visit comes as Bahraini rights activists have raised concerns that the ruling Al Khalifah regime would take advantage of the trip to showcase an image of religious coexistence even while standing accused of systematic persecution of the Shia majority in the country, including many of the political prisoners.

Maryam Alkhwaja, a Bahraini hu-

man rights activist and daughter of Abdulhadi Alkhwaja, a prominent human rights defender imprisoned since 2011, said that she and others had called on the Pope to cancel his visit to Bahrain or refuse to shake hands with the kingdom's ruler, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, but neither of them came to pass.

"However, we are very happy to see that he took this as an opportunity to raise human rights concerns including the death penalty and the discrimination against the Shia population in Bahrain," Alkhwaja said.

The rights activist also said she believed the regime's plan to use the Pope's trip as a publicity stunt had backfired, adding, "The visit has worked against them as it has brought further attention to the disastrous human rights situation in the country."

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, director of the UK-based Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (Bird), greeted the Pope's comments as "a historic moment" and said he hoped Francis would meet with the families of death row inmates before he leaves the kingdom.

A report released by Bird and Human Rights Watch last month documented the case of eight men currently on death row in the kingdom, and found that they had been sentenced without any physical evidence, but solely or in large part on coerced confessions extracted through torture and ill-treatment.

Imprisoned Rights Defender in Saudi Arabia 'Forcibly Disappeared'

RIYADH (Middle East Eye) – Saudi authorities have forcibly disappeared a prominent human rights activist who has been imprisoned since 2013, according to rights groups.

Amnesty International said on Friday that Mohammed al-Qahtani has been denied contact with his family since 24 October and his whereabouts are unknown.

The family suspects his disappearance could be linked to complaints he made about being assaulted by another inmate earlier in the month.

Al-Qahtani's wife told the Saudi rights organization Sanad last week that she had become "concerned" for her husband after he didn't contact her at the time of his regular, scheduled call.

She then contacted the prison

to enquire about her husband and was told he had been transferred to another prison but did not disclose which one, Amnesty said.

"Amnesty International urges the Saudi Arabian authorities to reveal Mohammed al-Qahtani's whereabouts, allow him to contact his family, and unconditionally release him," the group said.

Mohammed al-Qahtani is a renowned human rights activist who in 2009 co-founded the now-disbanded Saudi Association for Civil and Political Rights, known in Arabic as HASM and English as ACPRA.

In 2012 he was arrested alongside ACPRA's other co-founder, Abdullah al-Hamid.

In 2013, the pair were handed 10 and 11-year prison sentences over their peaceful activism.

Al-Hamid, a pioneering Saudi human rights defender, died in prison while serving his sentence in 2020.

He suffered a stroke two weeks before his death but was kept in detention despite being in a coma at the hospital.

Several other founding members of ACPRA are also behind bars, including Waleed Abu al-Khair, and Mohammed al-Bajadi, who has been detained without charge or trial since 2018.

Rights advocates and researchers say Saudi Arabia has witnessed an ongoing pattern of systematic repression since 2017 after Mohamed bin Salman became crown prince and de-facto ruler.

Since then waves of arrests have targeted dozens of academic and religious scholars, preachers, activists, economists,

human rights workers, and women's rights activists.

The majority remain behind bars, with some facing death sentences, such as Salman Odah, Ali al-Omari, and Awad al-Qarni.

Amnesty International says that as of November 2022 it has recorded 55 cases of people in Saudi Arabia prosecuted "for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly".

In May 2020 the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearances raised alarm bells over this pattern of repression.

The group told the UN General Assembly that Saudi Arabia's legal framework had failed to protect its people from enforced disappearance, which they said was being used as a tool of suppression.

Scores of Syrian Refugees Head Home From Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP) – Scores of Syrian refugees headed home Saturday from eastern Lebanon in the second convoy in less than two weeks as Beirut attempts to organize a mass refugee return to the country.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said the voluntary return Saturday included 330 Syrians who left from the eastern Bekaa Valley to Syria's western Qalamoun region. Qalamoun borders Lebanon and years ago witnessed some of the worst fighting of Syria's foreign-backed war.

On Oct. 26, some 500 refugees returned to Syria, becoming the first group to return home in more than two years.

After living in Lebanon for years, many Syrian refugees have decided to go back home after being affected by the country's historic

three-year economic meltdown that pushed three-quarters of Lebanese into poverty.

Lebanon has given shelter to more than 1 million Syrian refugees but many claim the number is far higher. The UN refugee agency has registered about 825,000 Syrians but stopped counting them in 2015 at the request of Lebanese authorities. Earlier this year, officials touted a plan to return 15,000 refugees a month, which has so far failed to materialize.

In 2018, Lebanon began organizing voluntary return trips.

The returnees represent just a tiny fraction of the massive population of refugees who remain in Lebanon.

"The returnees have received guarantees from the Lebanese and Syrian authorities to return,"

Lebanon's caretaker Social Affairs Minister Hector Hajjar told reporters near the Syrian border on Saturday. He added that the international community should encourage such returns and if not then they "should be neutral in this case."

The trips back were halted in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic. At that point, some 21,000 refugees had returned to Syria this way, according to Lebanese officials. UNHCR says at least 76,500 Syrian refugees returned voluntarily from Lebanon since 2016, some in government-organized trips and some on their own.

Syria's conflict that began in March 2011 has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced half the country's pre-war population of 23 million.

Zionist Siege Damaged Nablus Economy

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Twenty-one days of siege by the Zionist regime has damaged the economy of the occupied West Bank city of Nablus and resulted in major commercial losses for traders, Anadolu Agency has reported.

Palestinian traders and officials from Nablus, the major commercial hub in the West Bank, said that the regime's siege has suffocated the city and its residents and resulted in economic losses that require much time to recover.

On 12 October, the occupation surrounded the city with high cement blocks, large sandbags and sand barricades, imposing a strict siege on the city, which, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Economy, includes 17,113 commercial and industrial facilities.

The siege lasted for 21 days, as the Israeli occupation announced lifting the restrictions on the city

on 3 November.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency, trader Ahmad Abu Hashish shared: "Nablus lived a choking siege that crippled its economy. The siege affected a large number of traders and shop owners."

Abu Hashish owns a clothes shop on a road closed with sand barricades: "This street serves the governorates of Nablus, Tulkarm, Jenin and Qalqilia. People travelling to and from Ramallah pass through this way. It has a strategic commercial location."

He continued: "During the siege, it was almost empty. We lived hard days. In addition to the siege, the Israeli occupation imposed curfews from time to time."

Meanwhile, Mujahed Salam, another shop owner, said that the city witnessed a crippling siege

similar to the one imposed at the beginning of the second Intifada.

He indicated that Palestinians from Nablus, major West Bank cities and Palestinian cities from occupied territories shop at Nablus shops, which include a wide variety of goods.

Spokesperson of the Nablus Chamber of Commerce Yassin Dwekat said that the city's economy had suffered losses estimated at hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars.

Dwekat explained that Nablus includes four industrial zones and that the Zionist regime's siege paralyzed a large portion of the West Bank economy.

The Palestinian Ministry of Economy confirmed that the siege stopped the operations of 50 percent of the city's factories, noting that this led to an economic retreat of 60 percent.