



**ON THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOUTHIS BOMBING OF A MIGRANT  
DETENTION CENTER IN YEMEN, OLLAA & BRIDGES FOR YEMEN HONOR THE VICTIMS**

*Falls Church, Virginia (3/7/2022)* – One year ago today, Houthi rebels launched projectiles at the Immigration, Passport and Naturalization Authority Holding Facility in Sana’a, Yemen, after migrants went on a [hunger strike](#), protesting their ill-treatment and arbitrary detention. The detention center, which was reportedly overcrowded with Oromo and African migrants who refused to be recruited to fight for the Houthis, caught fire, resulting in the tragic deaths of hundreds of refugees and migrants seeking protection, with reports suggesting this included over 400 Ethiopians. Many of those who survived were left with grievous injuries and are still in dire need of further medical care. For those Oromo migrants and refugees fleeing their governments' persecution who were caught in the inferno, this tragedy represented an end to the perilous journey that had taken them to Yemen, which is part of the main migration route leading Oromo migrants to Saudi Arabia and other countries.

As noted by Katharina Ritz, Head of the Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross Delegation in Yemen – Sana’a :

*“The fire at the center in Sana’a in March 2021 was a terrible tragedy. Migrants traveling across Yemen in search of a better life often have lived through harrowing experiences since leaving their homes in Somalia, Ethiopia or further afield. It is heart-breaking that for some of them, their journey ended in such an appalling fashion.”*

Today, OLLAA expresses its profound sympathy to the victims of this attack, along with their families, and disappointment that one year later no credible investigations have taken place, nor has any meaningful support been provided to survivors. We recognize the tragedy that so many Oromo lives were lost in Yemen, a country where many had traveled in hopes of finding a better life and financial security. We also continue to be dismayed and appalled by the fact that so many Oromos, as well as other migrants and refugees, who were injured in these attacks still lack access to adequate medical care and support services. We urge the international community, alongside the Yemeni and Ethiopian governments, to ensure that these refugees and migrants are given access to the support services they need, including through the provision of humanitarian aid. Finally, in order to obtain some measure for justice for the victims of this terrible tragedy, an independent and effective investigation must be launched into this attack.

“Houthis must be held accountable for committing this atrocity and the continuous exploitation and recruitment of the Oromo and African migrants and refugees. The international community must support the efforts of IOM and UNHCR to protect Oromo and African migrants and refugees from any violations committed by warring parties. Justice delayed is better than justice denied.” Husam Kaid, co-Founder of Bridges for Yemen.

*OLLAA is an umbrella organization that represents Oromo communities around the world.*