

Group Accuses Yemen of Ignoring Protesters' Killings
By The Associated Press, New York Times
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SANA, Yemen (AP) — Human Rights Watch accused Yemen on Tuesday of failing to investigate the 2011 killing of 45 antigovernment protesters during the uprising against former President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The group said in a report that top former officials, including Mr. Saleh's relatives, should be held responsible for the deaths in the March 18, 2011, confrontation in which the government unleashed security forces on the demonstrators in the capital, Sana. Mr. Saleh stepped down last year.

Letta Tayler, a senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, warned that "if Yemen doesn't fairly investigate and prosecute those responsible for this deadly attack, it risks perpetuating the culture of impunity at the heart of Yemen's uprising."

The report said that "several senior former and current government officials appear to have played a role in the massacre but have not been charged." The organization said its report was based on more than 60 interviews. It found that the Central Security Forces, led then by Mr. Saleh's nephew, withdrew from the streets where the shootings took place, but returned to shield the gunmen from protesters.

Besides reopening the investigations, Human Rights Watch recommended that Yemen arrest and prosecute those involved. It also called for an asset freeze and travel ban on current and former officials implicated in the attack and other rights violations.

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