

South Yemen Update



Dream no small dreams for they do not have the power to move the hearts of men

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Violent Clashes Erupt Near Maashiq Palace in Aden

Aden witnessed serious security tensions on 20 February 2026 following violent clashes in the vicinity of Maashiq Presidential Palace, located in the Crater district of the city. The unrest unfolded after a popular protest escalated into armed confrontations between security forces and demonstrators.

Eyewitnesses reported that hundreds of protesters had gathered near the palace to express anger over the coerced dissolution of the STC, deteriorating living conditions, rising prices, and prolonged electricity outages. The protest, which began peacefully, turned chaotic after security units attempted to disperse the crowd using live ammunition and tear gas.

Local medical sources confirmed that at one person was killed and dozens more injured, including several teenagers. Among the victims were individuals under the age of 18. Hospitals in the city struggled to cope with the sudden influx of casualties amid shortages of medical supplies.



Residents in the surrounding neighbourhoods described scenes of panic, with heavy gunfire echoing through the streets and civilians trapped in their homes for hours. Many shops closed and traffic came to a complete halt as clashes continued into the evening. More than 50 people were arrested unlawfully in Aden and the surrounding area.

Human rights activists condemned the excessive use of force against unarmed civilians, calling for an immediate and transparent investigation into the killings. They stressed that peaceful protest is a protected right under international law and that those responsible for ordering or carrying out unlawful violence must be held accountable. Human rights activists locally and internationally are investigating these incidents.

The incident has further deepened public anger in Aden, a city already burdened by economic collapse and fragile security. Analysts warn that continued repression of protests risks pushing the city toward wider instability.

Despite official silence from authorities inside Maashiq Palace, local sources say reinforcements were deployed around key government buildings following the clashes. Meanwhile, families of the victims have demanded justice and accountability, holding the authorities fully responsible for what they described as a “massacre of civilians.”

The events near Maashiq Palace mark one of the deadliest confrontations in Aden in recent months and highlight the growing divide between ruling authorities and an increasingly desperate population.

Massive Rally In Aden Backs Al-Zubaidi, Rejects STC Headquarters Closure

Tens of thousands gathered in Al-Aroud Square in the capital, Aden, on Friday (February 27), in a mass rally called for by the Southern Transitional Council (STC). Participants renewed their allegiance to the Council and the mandate of its President, Major General Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, according to a statement issued.

The statement noted that the participants affirmed their adherence to the Political and Constitutional Declarations issued on January 2 of this year, in addition to the Southern National Charter, considering them “binding political references” that reflect the popular will in the South.

Protesters raised the flags of the South and portraits of Al-Zubaidi, chanting slogans confirming their support for the STC as the political representative of their cause.

The statement emphasized the rejection of any attempts to “create alternative political entities that lack popular legitimacy.”

The statement condemned the decisions to close the STC headquarters in Aden, including the General Secretariat and the National Assembly, considering these steps a political escalation and an attempt to undermine the Council’s role and institutions.

The headquarters were closed on February 22, and the STC accused the Chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), Rashad Al-Alimi, of issuing the orders.



Furthermore, participants demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the STC representatives in Riyadh, referring to the delegation that arrived in Saudi Arabia on January 7 and announced the dissolution of the STC from there. While some delegation members claim they are moving freely without restrictions, the STC maintains that the delegation is unable to leave Saudi Arabia.

The statement declared support for any serious political dialogue, provided it is held in the capital, Aden, under clear regional and international guarantees. It emphasized that any final agreement regarding the future of the South "must be submitted to a popular referendum," reaffirming the demand for self-determination.

The statement warned against the continued operation of what it described as the "de facto government" in Aden without consensus with the Southern national movement represented by the STC, considering that bypassing the principle of partnership could lead to further political tension in the city.

On the security and military front, participants rejected any measures aimed at dismantling the Southern Armed Forces or weakening their role, warning against using the military establishment as a "repressive tool against Southerners." The statement called for an international investigation into Saudi airstrikes that targeted Southern forces, as well as violations against peaceful protesters in recent weeks in Shabwa, Hadramout, and Aden. The statement also held the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in its capacity as the "manager of the Yemen file," responsible for what it described as imposing a de facto government and marginalizing the STC. No immediate comment was issued by the Presidential Leadership Council or relevant authorities regarding the demands and accusations contained in the statement.

Read more at: <https://south24.net/news/newse.php?nid=5346>



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