

Yemen Forces Kill 40 Protesters

Yemen security forces have killed 40 people and injured hundreds more. Snipers opened fire from rooftops at thousand of protesters gathered in Taghyeer Square demanding an end to Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 30-year rule.

The shootings mark the deadliest state force in two months of political unrest in the Middle East. Saleh declared a state of emergency—but protesters are not giving up despite meeting with shootings, water cannons and tear gas. Saleh called those who were killed martyrs of democracy.

President Obama strongly condemned the violence in Yemen and called on Saleh to adhere to his public pledge to allow demonstrations to take place peacefully.

"Those responsible for today's violence must be held accountable. The United States stands for a set of universal rights, including the freedom of expression and assembly, as well as political change that meets the aspirations of the Yemeni people," Obama said. "It is more important than ever for all sides to participate in an open and transparent process that addresses the legitimate concerns of the Yemeni people, and provides a peaceful, orderly and democratic path to a stronger and more prosperous nation."

At a press conference, Saleh suggested that his forces were not responsible for the shootings and pointed to a Saudi Arabians as the culprits. Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz is working to bolster the nation's religious establishment, military and security. Aziz introduced new benefits for citizens while ignoring calls for political reform.