



HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

14 – 20 March, 2022



Human Rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of the nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language or any other status without discrimination. These rights are all universal, inalienable, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.



LOCAL

Monday

14 March 2022

Lebanon – [Lebanese parties jostle for votes; Arab League to monitor elections](#)

Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit has announced that his organization is ready to send a team to Lebanon to monitor the parliamentary elections scheduled for May 15. “The Arab League has done this in Algeria, Iraq, Palestine, and many regions, and I think we will implement this in Lebanon,” he said. Aboul Gheit visited Lebanon on Monday as part of the arrangements for holding the Arab summit in Algeria on Nov. 1 and 2.

Tuesday

15 March 2022

Lebanon – [Palestinian advocacy group highlights condition of refugee children in Lebanon](#)

The Palestinian Return Centre (PRC) has highlighted its concerns about the condition of refugee children in Lebanon. The PRC pointed out that the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) has registered more than 60,000 children among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, making up 30 per cent of the total. Most of them are unable to attend Lebanese schools.

Lebanon – [139 Syrian refugees arbitrarily arrested in Lebanon in 2021](#)

Arbitrary arrests of Syrian refugees in Lebanon are on the rise. The Access Center for Human Rights documented 139 cases of arbitrary arrests in 2021, including ten minors, compared to 25 cases in 2020. Arrests were made during raids on refugee camps, in population centers, at security checkpoints, or even at Beirut airport. Five of the people arrested were handed over to the Syrian authorities, who directly referred them to compulsory military service.

Wednesday

16 March 2022

Beirut – [Lebanon faces food crisis with 'no wheat orders since Ukraine war began'](#)

Lebanon's wheat importers have not placed any new orders on the global market since Russia invaded Ukraine three weeks ago and have started rationing what they sell to supermarkets amid widespread panic-buying. “The situation is getting critical,” said Paul Mansour, owner of Crown Mills, one of only 12 importers of wheat in the country. With countries rushing to secure new sources of wheat, Mr. Mansour said there was little interest in selling to cash-strapped Lebanon's small market of six million people.

Lebanon – ['Not a Penny' of Saudi Aid Will Pass through Lebanese State](#)

The French and Saudi officials who met in Paris on Tuesday discussed “the coordination of the executive steps that have been agreed to assist Lebanon, especially through the joint fund that has been set up for this purpose”. “Not a single penny of the Saudi aid parcel for the Lebanese will pass through the official Lebanese institutions,” the sources told Nidaa al-Watan newspaper in remarks published Wednesday. A statement issued that day had said that the assistance will be offered to several hospitals and primary care health centers as well as educational institutions and NGOs that distribute infant milk and food to the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Thursday
17 March 2022

Lebanon – [Lebanon holds hundreds of Syrian activists at notorious jail](#)

Lebanese authorities are detaining hundreds of Syrian journalists and activists at the notorious Roumieh prison, east of Beirut, The New Arab's affiliate Syria TV reported on Thursday. Sources from within the prison told Syria TV that around 300 Syrian journalists, media activists, and other political prisoners are being held there, emphasizing that this number does not include Syrians held for ordinary crimes. Tariq Shandab, a lawyer specializing in international law, said that many of the prisoners are media activists who supported the Syrian revolution against President Bashar Al-Assad.

Friday
18 March 2022

Lebanon – [Lebanon's Hezbollah chief denies sending fighters to support Russia in Ukraine](#)

Lebanon's Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah on Friday denied reports about sending fighters and experts to fight alongside Russia in Ukraine. Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave the green light for up to 16,000 volunteers from the Middle East to be deployed alongside Russian-backed rebels to fight in Ukraine.

Lebanon – [Finland the world's happiest country for the fifth year running while Afghanistan and Lebanon bottom](#)

The largest falls in the World Happiness table, released on Friday, came in Lebanon, Venezuela and Afghanistan. Lebanon, which is facing economic meltdown, fell to second from last on the index of 146 countries, just below Zimbabwe.

Saturday and Sunday
19 and 20 March 2022

Bekaa – [Syrian couple arrested in Lebanon for 'selling newborn girl'](#)

A Syrian couple living in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley have been arrested for allegedly selling their newborn baby girl for 7 million Lebanese Lira. Three other individuals involved in the alleged sale were also arrested on Thursday, all of whom were named on the Lebanese internal security forces website. No details were revealed about how the sale of the newborn was discovered - but both the baby girl and the money received for her sale were immediately seized by police.

Lebanon / Turkey – [Turkey sends humanitarian aid to Lebanon](#)

Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) is sending humanitarian aid to Lebanon. The first batch of the 524 tons of aid, which included baby formula and food, has been dispatched on a ship from the Turkish port of Mersin on the Mediterranean coast. Some 15 truckloads of aid material, collected under the coordination of AFAD, are now on their way to Lebanon, the relief agency said in a statement. Another 18 trucks will be sent to the country this week, AFAD added. According to the relief agency, another 1,000 tons of aid, including flour and food, will be delivered to Lebanon with a "Kindness Ship" before the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.



Monday
14 March 2022

Tunisia – [Tunisia: Military Court Jails Prominent Lawyer](#)

The jailing of a prominent lawyer on March 2, 2022, for arguing with police officers is an alarming new step in the confiscation of civil liberties since President Kais Saied seized extraordinary powers on July 25, 2021, Human Rights Watch said today. Abderrazak Kilani, a former government minister and head of the national bar association, is one of the most prominent Tunisians to be put behind bars for his peaceful expression since the ouster of the authoritarian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011.

Tuesday
15 March 2022

Syria – [Syrians seek justice for war atrocities 11 years after uprising](#)

Over the past decade, Syria's uprising-turned-civil war has been littered with grave human rights violations that rights groups say could amount to war crimes. The fighting has subsided in many parts of the war-torn country, but millions of Syrians tormented by forced displacement, torture, and the disappearance of their loved ones still wait for any semblance of justice. An estimated 500,000 people have been killed during the past 11 years, and millions were forced to flee the country. About 80 percent of the population lives in poverty. Al-Assad remains entrenched in power with Russian and Iranian military support.

Occupied Palestine – [Several Palestinians including teen killed by Israeli force](#)

Israeli forces have shot three Palestinians dead, including a teenager, in separate incidents in the occupied West Bank and in the Naqab (Negev) desert. In an Israeli raid on the sprawling Balata refugee camp in the northern city of Nablus early on Tuesday, 17-year-old Nader Rayan died after being shot in the head, chest and hand, the Palestinian health ministry said.

Syria – [Some Hope in the Struggle for Justice in Syria](#)

Tuesday marked eleven years since the peaceful uprising in Syria descended into a brutal armed conflict, and comprehensive justice for countless abuses committed during the crisis remains elusive. While many avenues for prosecuting war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria are blocked, the principle of universal jurisdiction opens a pathway for survivors to pursue a small measure of justice through European courts. Universal jurisdiction allows for the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes regardless of where the crimes were committed or the nationality of victims and perpetrators. Some European countries, including France and Sweden, are using these laws to investigate allegations of serious crimes in Syria. It is one of the few accountability options available for victims of atrocities committed there.

Wednesday
16 March 2022

Occupied Palestine – [Israeli Jews dress as Muslims to defy Al-Aqsa prayer ban](#)

The organization Returning to the Mount encourages Jews to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound by sneaking in among Muslim worshippers. They believe their actions will pave the way for "full Jewish sovereignty over the Temple Mount and building a Jewish temple over the Dome of the Rock," said the founder, explaining that they also try to keep the Israeli public engaged with the issue by holding demonstrations and working to influence parliament and the media.

Ukraine – [Mass Graves in Syria Could Hold Evidence of War Crimes](#)

The New York Times has gathered evidence that sheds new light on one enduring mystery of the Syrian war: What happened to the bodies of the many thousands who died or were killed in government detention centers? Interviews over the past several months with four Syrian men who worked at or near secret mass graves led to an examination of satellite images. Together, those clues revealed the locations of two sites. Each one holds thousands of bodies, according to the men who worked there. "If the issue of the missing and the disappeared is not resolved, there can never be peace in Syria," said Diab Serrih, the co-founder of an association of former detainees in Syria's notorious Saydnaya prison that has worked to locate mass graves.

Thursday
17 March 2022

Syria – [Syrian asylum seeker sues EU border agency](#)

A Syrian who says he was illegally pushed back into Turkey by Greek authorities is suing the European Union border agency Frontex for alleged complicity. Front-Lex said that, after Hamoudi arrived on the Greek island of Samos with about 20 other asylum seekers, they were loaded by Greek authorities onto a crowded inflatable dinghy and abandoned at sea for 17 hours. A Frontex plane surveilled the situation at the time, alleged Hamoudi, who now resides in Turkey. Such an act, if proven, could constitute “refoulement” – the forcible return of refugees or asylum seekers, which is illegal under international law binding on all countries.

Iran – [Human rights groups condemn 'draconian' Iranian internet bill](#)

A coalition of human rights groups has issued a joint statement condemning moves by Iran to introduce widespread censorship and state control of the nation’s internet infrastructure. If passed, the bill would place Iran’s internet infrastructure and national gateways under the control of the country’s unelected leadership, armed forces, and security architecture. If implemented, the bill would see a taskforce established to manage information flows in and out of the country.

Friday
18 March 2022

Egypt – [Egypt's forgotten mental health crisis](#)

UN war crimes investigators have urged the United States to carry out thorough probes into civilian casualties caused by US air raids in Syria to ensure that those responsible for any violations are held to account. In November, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin ordered a review of a 2019 attack in the Syrian town of Baghuz that caused civilian casualties, the Pentagon said at the time. The New York Times had reported that the raid killed up to 64 women and children, a possible war crime, during the battle against the ISIL (ISIS) armed group.

Saturday and Sunday
19 and 20 March 2022

Sudan – [Sudanese seek relief from declining living conditions](#)

Many in Sudan have been grappling with shortages in basic goods, as well as new taxes and steep price hikes on fuel, electricity and food since an October military coup led by army chief Gen. Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan. It also triggered international condemnation and punitive measures, with the US, World Bank and International Monetary Fund suspending badly needed aid to the impoverished country. Sudanese exports have sharply declined, foreign currency shortages have been reported, and efforts by local banks to re-establish ties with international counterparts in the US and the West came to a screeching halt.

Yemen – [Overshadowed by Ukraine war, Yemen on brink as pledges fall short](#)

The UN was seeking \$4.3bn but it could raise only \$1.3bn, with some major donors missing, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia. Overshadowed by the conflict in Ukraine, aid-starved Yemen – already suffering the world’s worst humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations – is on the verge of total collapse. Some 80 percent of its about 30 million people depend on aid for survival, after seven years of a conflict that has killed hundreds of thousands of people, directly or indirectly.

Occupied Palestine – [Palestinian man shot by police after alleged stabbing attack](#)

A Palestinian man has been shot by Israeli forces following an alleged stabbing attack in West Jerusalem, according to police. Israeli forces opened fire on the attacker and neutralized him, the statement said, without specifying what his condition was. The Magen David Adom emergency services said the Israeli, in his mid-30s, was lightly injured.

Tunisia – [Europe-bound ship carrying refugees capsizes off Tunisia, 20 dead](#)

The death toll from a migrant shipwreck off Tunisia on Friday has risen to 20, most of them Syrians, as they tried to cross the Mediterranean to Italy, a civil protection official said on Saturday, in the latest migrant ship disaster off Tunisia. Tunisia and neighboring Libya are key departure points for migrants and refugees seeking to reach European shores. Hundreds of thousands of people have made the perilous Mediterranean crossing in recent years, many of them fleeing conflict and poverty in Africa and the Middle East.

Tunisia – [Tunisia: Mass anti-Saied protests take place in capital Tunis](#)

Thousands of Tunisians have taken to the streets of the capital Tunis in the latest of a series of rallies against President Kais Saied, accused by opponents of grabbing power amid a deepening political crisis. In July last year, President Saied suspended parliament and sacked the prime minister, before further expanding his legislative and executive powers and suspending some parts of the constitution.



INTERNATIONAL

March
14 March 2022

Ukraine – [Russia: With Tech Firms Pulling Out, Internet Spiraling into Isolation](#)

Several leading foreign tech companies have withdrawn from Russia or suspended operations in the two weeks since Russia's full-scale invasion in Ukraine, exacerbating the risk of isolation from the global internet for the country's residents. Withdrawals of tech companies come at a time when Russian authorities have doubled down on the use of their "sovereign internet" technology to block access to numerous independent media and social media platforms. Such technology potentially enables Russia to put the entire country in digital isolation. Foreign tech companies and governments should carefully assess how their actions may contribute to the eradication of the remaining online freedoms in Russia and take steps to mitigate undue restrictions based on their human rights responsibilities and obligations, according to Human Rights Watch.

Myanmar – [A Year On, No Justice for Myanmar Massacre](#)

Human Rights Watch documented that police and soldiers with assault rifles deliberately surrounded – or "kettled" – the Hlaing Tharyar protesters who demonstrated against the military coup, killing at least 65 people. The security forces, witnesses said, emerged from different directions to trap them. The shootings in Hlaing Tharyar stand out as one of the deadliest days since the coup, not least because of the apparent premeditated use of lethal force.

Tuesday
15 March 2022

Mali – [Mali: New Wave of Executions of Civilians](#)

The Malian army and armed Islamist groups have allegedly killed at least 107 civilians in central and southwestern Mali since December 2021, Human Rights Watch said today. The victims, most allegedly summarily executed, include traders, village chiefs, religious leaders, and children. Mali's transitional government should conduct credible and impartial criminal investigations into these alleged killings, of which at least 71 were linked to government forces and 36 to armed Islamist groups, known as jihadists. Both sides should end the abuses and ensure respect for the laws of war, which are applicable to Mali's armed conflict.

Wednesday
16 March 2022

Denmark – [Denmark's Mismatched Treatment of Syrian and Ukrainian Refugees](#)

Shortly after Russia's latest invasion of Ukraine, the Danish Immigration Service reportedly asked Denmark's 98 municipalities to assess their capacity to take in Ukrainian refugees. This same agency recently began stripping Syrian refugees of their residency permits in a bid to force them back to Syria, asserting that parts of Syria are safe.

Ukraine – [Ukraine: Mariupol Theater Hit by Russian Attack Sheltered Hundreds](#)

Pavlo Kirilenko, the governor of Ukraine's Donetsk region, announced on March 16 that Russian forces had bombed the Donetsk Regional Theater of Drama, where hundreds of residents were sheltering in the besieged city of Mariupol. In satellite imagery of the theater from March 14, the Russian word for "children" clearly appears written twice in large Cyrillic script in front and behind the theater.

Ecuador – [Ecuador: Investigate Police Abuse During Women's Day Marches](#)

Ecuadorian police responded to peaceful demonstrations commemorating International Women's Day on March 8, 2022, with excessive force, including striking a journalist with a club and indiscriminate use of teargas and pepper spray, Human Rights Watch said today.

Thursday
17 March 2022

Greece – [A Ray of Hope in Fight Against Greece's Border Abuses](#)

The European Court of Human Rights issued an emergency order directing the Greek authorities not to carry out the summary return of an asylum seeker to Turkey from the Greek Islands. Human Rights Watch and others have repeatedly documented how Greek law enforcement officers apprehend newly arrived asylum seekers within hours after their landing on Greek islands, and summarily expel them to Turkey. Usually, people are forced onto large Coast Guard boats first and then cast adrift on small inflatable rescue rafts near the Turkish sea border.

Mozambique – [Violence Increases in Northern Mozambique](#)

This year, attacks by the armed group known locally as Al-Shabab or Al-Sunna wa Jama'a (ASWJ) in the northern Mozambique province of Cabo Delgado have led to a spike in abductions and destroyed homes. The violence displaced people in a region where more than 700,000 have fled their homes since ASWJ's insurgency began four years ago.

Venezuela – [Venezuela Under Scrutiny at the UN Human Rights Council](#)

On March 17 and 18, oral updates by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet and the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela (FFM) will provide an opportunity for UN Human Rights Council (HRC) member states to shed light on the three ongoing human rights crises in Venezuela; the crackdown on dissent, the humanitarian emergency, and the migration crisis.

Friday
18 March 2022

Ukraine – [Ukraine: Deadly Attacks Kill, Injure Civilians, Destroy Homes](#)

More than 450 civilians were reportedly killed or injured in the first 11 days of the war, in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, as a result of Russian airstrikes and artillery shelling of populated areas, Human Rights Watch said today. The attacks damaged civilian buildings, including apartment blocks, schools, places of worship, and shops, impeding access to food and medicines. They also damaged infrastructure in the city causing civilians to lose vital services such as electricity, heat, and water.

Sudan – ['They Keep Killing Us': Violence Rages in Sudan's Darfur Two Decades On](#)

Violent attacks against largely ethnic African communities in Sudan have surged in the past year, with more than 420,000 people forced to flee their homes in 2021, up from 54,000 a year earlier, according to the United Nations humanitarian affairs office in Sudan. Aid agencies are struggling to raise funds for Darfur as the world's attention turns elsewhere, said Duncan Riddell, the Darfur area manager for the Norwegian Refugee Council. Last year, the crises in Ethiopia and Afghanistan dominated the concerns of Western donors – both now eclipsed by Ukraine.

France / Algeria – [Shadows of Algerian War Loom Over Election Campaign in France](#)

As President Emmanuel Macron addresses his country's colonial history, echoes of that past have pervaded the messaging of right-wing candidates ahead of the voting in April. In the fall, one far-right candidate, Éric Zemmour, said, "France does not have to welcome and keep all the criminals from North Africa." Another, Marine Le Pen, said on Friday that memories could not be reconciled "by scourging ourselves in front of Algeria." Mr. Macron's attempts to heal the wounds of France's colonization of Algeria have included acknowledging crimes committed by the French military and by the police, recognizing France's lack of regard for former settlers and Algerians who had fought for the country, and easing access to archives related to the war.

Pakistan – [Religion-Fueled Mobs on the Rise Again in Pakistan](#)

Last month, a man named Muhammad Mushtaq was accused of burning pages of the Quran inside a mosque in central Pakistan. A mob armed with sticks, bricks and axes gathered at the mosque and dragged him out. Instances of mob violence, and state-enforced criminal blasphemy cases, are more frequent in Pakistan than anywhere else, according to a report by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Saturday and Sunday
19 and 20 March 2022