



HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

21 – 27 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.

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LOCAL

Monday
21 March 2022

Lebanon – [Ruling class brings back its MPs](#)

The political parties in power renominated 59 of their 78 total current MPs despite the widespread popular discontent.

Tuesday
22 March 2022

Lebanon – [Lebanon plans tender to import Indian wheat, seeks alternative to Ukrainian grain](#)

Lebanon is planning a tender to import 50,000 tonnes of wheat from India but the timing depends on the Lebanese central bank opening the necessary credit line, the economy minister told *Reuters*, as Beirut seeks alternatives to Ukrainian grain.

Wednesday
23 March 2022

Lebanon – [Follow the sun: Breaking down Lebanon's solar revolution](#)

Without state-provided electricity and fuel to run private generators, everyday people in Lebanon have been forced to seek out alternative ways to power their homes. Many are turning to solar energy.

Lebanon – [Sentence issued in case of Roula Yaacoub murder](#)

Years after the murder of Roula Yaacoub at the hands of her husband, the Court of Cassation issued a ruling to imprison Roula's husband for 5 years and ordering him to pay her mother 300 million Lebanese pounds in compensation.

Thursday
24 March 2022

Lebanon – [Court charges Lebanon's Geagea over Beirut violence](#)

A Lebanese military court has charged Christian politician Samir Geagea over deadly clashes in Beirut last October, local media, as well as a judicial source, said, in a move that could stoke political tension two months before parliamentary elections.

Lebanon – [Amin Salam: Lebanon will face food security challenges in 'four to six months'](#)

The Economy and Trade Minister told *L'Orient-Le Jour* that there is no need for alarm, and that his team is already examining alternative solutions to Russian and Ukrainian wheat, while preparing for the possibility of a lifting of central bank subsidies on imports of this essential commodity.

Lebanon – [Beirut's silos to remain in place, for now](#)

On Monday, Culture Minister Mohammad Mortada said cabinet has decided to classify Beirut port's grain silos as a historical monument. The victims' relatives have long been calling for the silos to be designated a memorial. "Given the need to preserve these historic silos as part of a human heritage and given that they have become the emblem of a stricken city, I have taken the decision to classify them as historical monuments," the minister added.

Friday
25 March 2022

Lebanon – [Kham Prison: unpublished archival documents reveal the extent of Shin Bet involvement](#)

Shin Bet, Israel's national intelligence agency, released records this week detailing the administration and living conditions of several hundred Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held in the Kham detention center in the South Lebanon occupation zone between 1985 and 2000. Prisoners were indefinitely incarcerated outside any procedural framework, without trial, and without detention orders. Food shortages left dozens of detainees without food. A man suspected of being "associated with Hezbollah" was electrocuted through his fingers.

Lebanon – [Psychiatric drugs in Lebanon by the numbers](#)

Available figures on mental health in Lebanon reflect the impact of the crisis and its financial cost on residents. They also reveal the priorities of the regime, which continues to overlook mental health and neglect the specialized medical staff.

Lebanon – [UN Special Coordinator Visits Bourj al-Barajneh Camp](#)

U.N. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Joanna Wronecka has visited the Palestinian refugee camp of Bourj al-Barajneh in Beirut's southern suburbs, accompanied by Claudio Cordone, Director of UNRWA Affairs, Lebanon. Highlighting the importance of sustaining stability and ensuring critical support for Palestine refugees by UNRWA in a predictable and consistent manner, the Special Coordinator reiterates "the urgent need to step up additional international funding for the agency's 2022 Emergency Appeal, including to cover the 85 million USD dollars needed for emergency humanitarian response in Lebanon," a statement issued by her office said.

Saturday and Sunday
26 and 27 March 2022

Ansar – [Horror murder of mother, three daughters shakes Lebanon](#)

The bodies of a Lebanese mother and her three daughters have been discovered by Lebanese security services in south Lebanon on Friday after it emerged that the four women were reported as missing for 25 days. The remains of Basma Abbas and her three daughters, Tala, 20, Rima, 22, and Manal, 16, were found in an orchard between the southern towns of Ansar and al-Zararia. The suspect, identified as Hussein Fayyad, admitted to the murders during two days of interrogation by the local intelligence services - and gave up the identity of a Syrian citizen who he claimed was an accomplice to the crime.

Lebanon – [Meat Off The Menu As Economic Crisis Deepens In Lebanon](#)

Lebanon is grappling with an unprecedented financial crisis that the World Bank says is of a scale usually associated with full-scale wars. The price of imported red meat has increased fivefold, with some cuts costing more than the monthly minimum wage of 675,000 Lebanese pounds (\$33). As a result, dietary habits have changed and plant-based dishes -- a popular part of Lebanon's Mediterranean cuisine -- are now a main course in many households.



Monday
21 March 2022

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. On Sunday, several thousand people, including supporters of the Ennahdha movement, marched near the parliament in central Tunis, witnesses said. Security forces sealed off nearby Bardo Square and entrances leading to it to prevent protesters from gathering there, they added. Protesters chanted against Saied's measures and accused him of monopolizing power.

Sudan – [US issues sanctions on Sudan's police over protest crackdown](#)

The United States has imposed sanctions on Sudan's Central Reserve Police, accusing it of using excessive force against peaceful protesters demonstrating against last October's military coup. Pointing to a single day in January, it accused the group of firing live ammunition and, along with anti-riot police and regular police, chasing protesters trying to flee, arresting and beating some, and fatally shooting two and injuring others.

Qatar – [Qatar's Migrant Workers Sidelined Ahead of World Cup](#)

National football associations preparing for the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar are finding a difficult balance between promoting their teams' laudable human rights concerns and speaking realistically about the abusive reality for many migrant workers building the games. Recent remarks by Mark Bullingham, Chief Executive of the English Football Association, highlight the disconnect. "I think the one thing I would say though is all of the migrant workers who we've met and the NGOs we've met on the round have been really clear that actually they want the world cup to go ahead in Qatar," he said.

Russia / Middle East – [Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Exacerbates Hunger in Middle East, North Africa](#)

Governments should ensure that the conflict in Ukraine does not worsen the food crisis in the Middle East and North Africa and protect the right to affordable, adequate food for everyone, Human Rights Watch said today. Both Ukraine and Russia are leading exporters of agricultural products to many Middle Eastern and North African countries, and disruptions related to the war are exacerbating already-rising food prices and deepening poverty.

Tuesday
22 March 2022

Tunisia – [In Tunisia, State Television the Latest Battleground](#)

Tunisian President Kais Saied has set about dismantling institutional checks on his authority since his July power grab, and state television is an obvious target. Since August, state channel Wataniya's talk shows have excluded almost everyone who openly doubts the president's path. They invited no one who called his actions a "coup," or who questioned the wisdom of the national consultation that bypassed constitutional institutions in favor of Saied's preferred style of "direct democracy."

Wednesday
23 March 2022

Afghanistan – [Taliban Close Girls' Secondary Schools in Afghanistan, Again](#)

On March 21 the Taliban promised to reopen all schools in Afghanistan, ending their seven-month de-facto ban on girls attending secondary school. Two days later, as many girls were preparing for the first day of the new school term, the Taliban reversed this decision, announcing that girls' secondary schools were to remain closed – indefinitely – until the Taliban put in place policies they say are compliant with "principles of Islamic law and Afghan culture," including further restrictions on schoolgirls' dress.

UK / Saudi Arabia – [English Premier League: Urgently Adopt Human Rights Policy](#)

The English Premier League should immediately adopt and implement human rights policies that would prohibit governments implicated in grave human rights abuses from securing stakes in Premier League clubs to whitewash their reputations, Human Rights Watch said today. The ban should be extended to state entities that they control, abusive state leaders, and individuals funding or otherwise assisting in serious abuses. On March 14, 2022, media reported that a consortium led by a Saudi media group closely connected to the Saudi government had expressed interest in purchasing Chelsea Football Club.

Thursday
24 March 2022

Occupied Palestine – [U.N. Investigator Accuses Israel of Apartheid, Citing Permanence of Occupation](#)

A United Nations special rapporteur has accused Israel of committing the crime of apartheid in the occupied territories, joining a growing group of international, Israeli and Palestinian rights watchdogs that have sought to recast the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a struggle for equal rights instead of a territorial dispute. Strongly denied by Israel and its supporters, who accuse the U.N. investigator of bias, the claim is the first time that a U.N.-appointed investigator has accused Israel of apartheid in such an unequivocal way.

Afghanistan – [Afghan Girls Grieve After School Ban Reinstated](#)

Girls in Afghanistan were set to return to their secondary schools on the morning of March 23d. But that morning, the Taliban announced – to the despair of schoolgirls, parents, and Afghans worldwide – that girls' secondary schools would remain closed until policies and school uniforms followed "principles of Islamic law and Afghan culture." A young girl Atefa and her friends were sent home after a short visit to their school. "Everyone at school had tears in their eyes," she said.

Afghanistan / France – [France: Afghan Evacuees Need Mental Health Support](#)

Many Afghans evacuated to France as the Taliban took over their country more than six months ago are experiencing trauma and psychological distress, Human Rights Watch said today. While France has provided important support to evacuees, including many with professional ties to the country, there remains a significant gap in terms of urgent and adequate psychosocial support.

Friday
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Pakistan – [Extreme Heat Dangers When Pregnant in Pakistan](#)

A new video shows how rising temperatures are increasing health pressures on pregnant women, new mothers, and their families in Sindh and Punjab provinces in Pakistan. Rising heat is also exacerbating existing inequities in maternal and newborn health.

Syria – [Syria constitutional talks fail again in Geneva](#)

With international focus on the war in Ukraine, a resolution to Syria's war continues to be further than ever, as talks between the Syrian government and the opposition once again broke down. The constitutional committee, a body including regime, opposition, and civil society members, was formed in 2019 and tasked with finding common ground on issues like state identity, governance, and the structure of public authorities, among others. With the focus on the constitution, issues such as violence and security, free and fair elections, and the creation of a transitional executive have been left at the wayside, with no sign that polarizing topics, such as the role of al-Assad and the form of government in a future Syria, are closer to being resolved.

Saturday and Sunday
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Iraq – [LGBTQ people in Iraq face violence by armed groups, police](#)

A new report from Human Rights Watch extensively details cases of abductions, attempted murder, extrajudicial killings, sexual violence including gang rape, and online harassment against LGBTQ people by Iraqi police and armed groups. In some cases, the abuses documented in the report were against children as young as 15.

Egypt – [Egypt: Police Target Sudanese Refugee Activists](#)

Egyptian police arbitrarily arrested at least 30 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers during raids in December 2021 and January 2022 and subjected some to forced physical labor and beatings, Human Rights Watch said today.

Afghanistan – [Afghan Refugees in UK Still in Limbo as Ukrainians Arrive](#)

In February, the UK government said that just 4,000 Afghans brought to Britain during the mass evacuation in November had been moved into homes – leaving 12,000 still housed temporarily in hotels. With a new and even larger refugee crisis exploding much closer to home now, officials are talking about taking in tens of thousands more refugees from the war in Ukraine. But the experience of Afghans has raised questions about whether the country can cope with much larger numbers when it has still not managed to settle thousands of Afghans many months after they arrived.



INTERNATIONAL

March
21 March 2022

Australia – [Australia: Extreme Heat Threatens Lives](#)

Australian local, state, and federal governments should act to protect their populations from the foreseeable harms of heatwaves exacerbated by climate change, Human Rights Watch said today in a new photo essay on the struggles of living with extreme heat. The photographs show life in Greater Western Sydney, where geography and flawed urban design exacerbate climate change-driven heat, providing an alarming insight into what the future may hold and why urgent government action is needed.

Myanmar – [Myanmar: US Recognizes Genocide Against Rohingya](#)

The United States government has formally determined that the Myanmar military committed the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity against ethnic Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State, Human Rights Watch said today. The US government should coordinate long overdue action with other countries to pursue justice, both for mass crimes committed against the Rohingya and for those committed against other ethnic minorities and pro democracy protesters since the military coup in February 2021.

Ukraine – [Ukraine: Ensure Safe Passage, Aid for Mariupol Civilians](#)

Thirty-two civilians who managed to escape southeastern Ukraine's besieged city of Mariupol last week told Human Rights Watch how they struggled to survive in below-freezing temperatures as Russian forces relentlessly attacked the city. They described men, women, and children sheltering in basements with little to no access to running water, power, heating, medical care, or mobile phone service since the siege began on March 2, 2022. Russian forces laying siege to Mariupol should immediately ensure that civilians in Mariupol are not being denied access to items essential for their survival such as water, food, and medicine, and should facilitate safe passage to areas under control of Ukrainian forces for civilians who choose to leave the city.

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Uganda – [Uganda: Hundreds 'Disappeared,' Tortured](#)

The Ugandan government has failed to hold to account security officials, who have unlawfully detained and tortured hundreds of government critics, opposition supporters, peaceful protesters, and others, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. The 62-page report documents enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention, torture, and other ill-treatment by the police, army, military intelligence, and Uganda's domestic intelligence body, the Internal Security Organization (ISO), most in unlawful places of detention in 2018, 2019, and around the January 2021 general elections.

DRC – [DR Congo: Martial Law Brings Crackdown in East](#)

The Democratic Republic of Congo's military has suppressed peaceful critics in the more than 10 months since the government imposed martial law in the conflict-ridden eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, Human Rights Watch said today. The military and police have curtailed freedom of expression, put down peaceful demonstrations with lethal force, and arbitrarily detained and prosecuted activists, journalists, and political opposition members.

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Russia – [Russia: Kremlin Targets Critics Amid Ukraine War](#)

The conviction of the imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny on new trumped-up charges on March 22, 2022, reflects the Russian government's intensified crackdown on dissent and free expression since the start of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, Human Rights Watch said today. "The latest verdict against Navalny is yet another mockery of justice," said Hugh Williamson, Europe and central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "This verdict is apparently intended not only to silence Navalny but to serve as a warning to Russian civil society and anyone who dares to stand up to the Kremlin's policies."

Thursday
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India / Kashmir – [Kashmiri Journalist Detained Under Draconian Indian Law](#)

A magistrate in India's Jammu and Kashmir region approved the detention of the respected Kashmiri journalist and editor Fahad Shah under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA) on the grounds that he had been "misguiding common masses by circulating fake news against the government and its policies." The government frequently invokes the law because it permits detentions without trial for up to two years on vague grounds of preventing the suspect "from acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State or the maintenance of public order."

Ethiopia – [Ethiopia: Airstrike on Camp for Displaced Likely War Crime](#)

An Ethiopian government airstrike hit a school compound hosting thousands of displaced Tigrayans in northwestern Tigray on January 7, 2022, Human Rights Watch said today. An apparent armed drone dropped three bombs on the compound in the town of Dedebit, killing at least 57 civilians and wounding more than 42 others.

Russia – [Russia: Arrests, Harassment of Ukraine War Dissidents](#)

Russian authorities have cracked down on journalists, human rights defenders, and activists in an effort to silence any criticism of the war in Ukraine, Human Rights Watch said today. The authorities have arbitrarily detained, judicially harassed, raided, and engaged in smear campaigns against critics. Unidentified assailants have physically attacked activists and damaged human rights organizations' offices. In recent weeks, various high-level officials, including President Vladimir Putin, labeled people critical of the war "national traitors."

Friday
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Ukraine – [Escaping the Bloodshed: Refugees Reach Slovakia After Fleeing Ukraine War](#)

As long as Russia continues to attack Ukrainian cities and towns, the stream of people fleeing Ukraine for safe haven in the EU will likely continue day and night. In the absence of greater government preparedness and coordination, this organized chaos carries risks. The vast majority of refugees coming out of Ukraine are women and children, including children who made the journey on their own or who have become separated from their caregivers. Virtually every humanitarian and human rights group representative Human Rights Watch spoke with at Vyšné Nemecké voiced concerns about human trafficking.

Ukraine – [About 300 People Died in Bombing of Mariupol Theater, Officials Say](#)

An estimated 300 people were killed in an attack on Mariupol's Drama Theater, which hundreds of people had been using as a bomb shelter, local officials said on Friday. The city, one of Ukraine's largest, has also been cut off from water, electricity and communications during the fighting, although Ukrainian officials have said that about 130 people were rescued from the theater. Ukrainian officials have attributed the damage to a Russian strike.

United States – [United States Will Welcome Up to 100,000 Ukrainian Refugees](#)

Bowing to domestic and international pressure, President Biden said on Thursday the United States would accept up to 100,000 refugees fleeing Ukraine and donate \$1 billion to help European countries facing a humanitarian crisis not seen on the continent since the end of World War II.

Saturday and Sunday
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Ukraine – [Public Health Catastrophe Looms in Ukraine, Experts Warn](#)

Ukraine has alarmingly high numbers of people living with H.I.V. and hepatitis C, and dangerously low levels of vaccination against measles, polio and Covid-19. Overcrowded and unsanitary living conditions for refugees are breeding grounds for cholera and other diarrheal diseases, not to mention respiratory plagues like Covid-19, pneumonia and tuberculosis. The conflict threatens to upend decades of progress against infectious diseases throughout the region, sparking new epidemics that will be nearly impossible to control.