



HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

4 – 10 April, 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
4 April 2022

Lebanon – [Hundreds of LAU students protest announced dollarization of tuition fees](#)
Hundreds of students at the Lebanese American University protested on the institution's Beirut campus on Monday against the dollarization of tuition fees starting fall 2022. The administration announced the upcoming change in its payment policy via an email last week.

Lebanon – [Aging becomes a restless test as Lebanon's economy collapses](#)
Growing older is not meant to be stressful, but Lebanon seems to always be the exception. Rather than finding their inner peace, taking up new hobbies, or basking in the warmth of their friends and family, those who live beyond 65 in the country are forced to work difficult hours to survive. Lebanon has the highest proportion of older citizens in the region. It also has the highest proportion of older citizens living alone, 12 percent of the Lebanese population. Named one of the worst since the mid-nineteenth century by the World Bank, the crisis led to a significant emigration wave of Lebanese youth. According to UNESCWA, demographic expectations in Lebanon suggest that 23 percent of the population will be over the age of 65 by 2050.

Tuesday
5 April 2022

Lebanon – [Labor Arbitration Council does Halima Arba Ubpah justice after 10 years of enduring slavery](#)
Halima Arba Ubpah has been finally provided justice by the first chamber of the Labor Arbitration Council on March 21, 2022 after enduring 10 years of slavery. Five years after the Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH) submitted a summoning of Halima's employer, the Labor Arbitration Council issued a unanimous verdict: "Obligation the defendant to pay the plaintiff Halima Ubpah 11 000 \$ or its equivalent in local currency based on dollar rate on the day of payment. It is a progress for many foreign workers who suffer from the modern slavery system to achieve their rights just like Halima.

Wednesday
6 April 2022

Lebanon – [LAU Students Just Organized A Sit-In Against The Dollarization Of Tuition Fees](#)
Students of the Lebanese American University (LAU) organized a sit-in on Wednesday on the Byblos and Beirut campuses to protest their university's decision regarding their tuition fees. The new decision, which will be in force as of Fall 2022, requires that students pay their tuition in fresh dollars, making the fees unaffordable for most. Journalists who came to cover the protest were prevented by the university from entering the campuses.

Thursday
7 April 2022

Lebanon – [Recession in Lebanon curbs hospitality sector's revival](#)
Worsening economic conditions in Lebanon have forced many people to adjust the fasting habits and festivities that usually accompany the month of Ramadan. The month of Ramadan, through the iftars (after sunset meals) and sahoors (before dawn meal) in restaurants, is an important source of income for the tourism sector every year. However, the market has been hit by the increase in the price of food, transport and generators' bills, the emigration of staff and the closing down of many tourist institutions due to the deterioration of the Lebanese pound.

Friday
8 April 2022

Lebanon – [IMF, Lebanon reach staff-level funding deal, subject to reforms](#)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Thursday it had reached a staff-level agreement with Lebanon for a four-year extended fund facility that would however only get full approval from the fund if Beirut enacts a series of reforms. An agreement with the IMF is seen as vital for Lebanon to begin exiting a crippling economic and financial meltdown that marks its most destabilizing crisis since the 1975-90 civil war. The extended fund arrangement would run over 46 months and Lebanon had requested access to the equivalent of around \$3 billion, the IMF said in a statement.

Lebanon – [LAU Suspends Students Who Participated In Sit-In Protest Against Dollarization](#)

In an email shared with students and faculty during the last week of March, LAU's President Michel Mawad revealed that the Lebanese American University (LAU) would adopt a fresh dollar budget effective Fall 2022. All tuition fees would subsequently have to be paid in fresh USD as opposed to the existing method of cheques and Lebanese Lira. This news spurred protests and sit-ins across the university's Beirut and Jbeil campuses, where students banded together to plead for more flexible financial plans. In a shocking update, students received the below email this morning informing them that various individuals would be suspended due to their participation in the sit-ins. The university cited cases of "physical and psychological abuse as well as damages of LAU property" as reasons for suspension.

Saturday and Sunday
9 and 10 April 2022

Lebanon – [Lebanon: What is driving the judiciary's recent actions against banks?](#)

Unfettered by judicial scrutiny, Lebanese banks have for almost three years run amok while a financial meltdown - which they are widely accused of exacerbating - wreaked havoc on the lives of the majority of Lebanese. With the economic crisis showing no sign of abating, the Lebanese judiciary, long held back by political pressure, has in recent weeks taken on the banking system. But as judges target banks, the government is now attempting to counterbalance their legal actions by putting political pressure on the judiciary.

Lebanon – [Charities in Lebanon warn that people are starving and help during Ramadan will be limited](#)

Officials from charitable organizations and imams at mosques in Lebanon have raised concerns about their reduced ability during Ramadan this year to help the growing number of people going hungry, as a result of the effects of the financial crisis in the country. The economic crisis has created harsh living conditions for many, as a result of which the number of families in need of assistance has increased. Meanwhile, the amount of donations received during Ramadan by charities and other groups that provide assistance is expected to fall, which will affect their ability to provide daily iftar meals for the growing numbers of people who are struggling.



Monday
4 April 2022

Egypt – [IMF : Prioritize Social protection in Egypt loan talks](#)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) should ensure that any new loan program with Egypt expands social protection, strengthens judicial independence, and addresses corruption and the need for transparency, including for military-owned businesses, seven organizations said. On March 23, 2022, the Egyptian government officially requested support from the IMF to help mitigate the economic fallout related to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The IMF since 2016 has approved three loans to Egypt worth a combined US\$20 billion. "Despite \$20 billion in lending to Egypt since 2016, the IMF has not achieved the reforms needed to meaningfully address the military's growing and unaccountable role in the economy or to expand the social safety net to adequately protect people's economic rights," said Sarah Saadoun, senior business and human rights researcher at Human Rights Watch.

Saudi Arabia – [Saudi Arabia: Uyghur girl, 13, among four 'facing deportation' and torture in China](#)

Saudi authorities must immediately release four Uyghurs – including a 13-year-old girl and her mother – who are at grave risk of being taken to repressive internment camps if sent back to China, Amnesty International said today amid fears that deportation plans for the group may already be under way. Under the customary international law principle of nonrefoulement and as a State Party to the UN Convention against Torture, Saudi Arabia is obliged not to return anyone to a country where they would face a real risk of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, persecution and other serious human rights violations.

Syria – [Governments shelling kills four children on their way to school](#)

Four children were killed by government shelling in rebel-held northwestern Syria on Monday, civil defence teams and local sources told Middle East Eye. The children were on their way to school in the town of Maaret al-Naasan, north of Idlib province, when a government missile targeted the area, killing three of them instantly, with one later succumbing to his wounds. United Nations spokesman Stephane Dujarric warned on Thursday that humanitarian conditions in northwest Syria are deteriorating due to the continuation of hostilities, and the deepening economic crisis. At least 30,000 children have been killed in Syria since the start of the war in March 2011, according to the Paris-based Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR).

Occupied Palestine – [Jerusalem: Israeli forces assault Palestinians celebrating Ramadan at Damascus Gate](#)

Israeli security forces on Sunday arrested 10 Palestinians and wounded others on the second night of a crackdown on crowds gathering at Damascus gate in occupied East Jerusalem. The attacks at Damascus Gate come amid heightened tensions and warnings of plans by Israeli settlers to storm al-Aqsa Mosque during the holy month of Ramadan, part of which will coincide with Jewish holidays.

Tuesday
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Occupied Palestine – [OIC \(The organisation of Islamic Cooperation\) condemns Israeli aggression against Palestinians](#)

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation has strongly condemned escalating daily attacks and crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, their property and institutions. In particular it highlighted the situation in the occupied city of Al-Quds, where it said violations of the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and barbaric attacks against worshippers continue. The organization called on the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to put pressure on Israel to abide by the principles of international law and international treaties and conventions and halt attacks against the Palestinian people and their institutions.

Jordan – [Activists' phones hacked with Israeli spyware Pegasus, say privacy groups](#)

Online hackers linked to the Jordanian government have been using Pegasus Spyware on the smartphones of human rights activists during protests in the country since 2019, according to a report from privacy groups. A joint report released on Tuesday by Front Line Defenders and Citizen Lab, two groups focusing on privacy and digital rights violations, found that four Jordanian lawyers, journalists and human rights defenders had been victims of a hacking campaign. Pegasus was developed by the Israeli NSO Group and used by countries including Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to illegally access the phone data of activists and journalists worldwide.

Wednesday
6 April 2022

Afghanistan – [Shrinking public space for Afghan women as Taliban expands curbs](#)

Since taking over Afghanistan last year, the Taliban rulers have reintroduced draconian restrictions on freedoms and movements, particularly directed at women, that are reminiscent of their last regime in the 1990s. Increasingly though, over the last few weeks, the Taliban leaders, particularly from its Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, have announced many new restrictions, even as criticism and international pressure mount against them. In December, the ministry, which replaced the Afghan Ministry of Women Affairs, imposed restrictions on women from travelling farther than 72km (45 miles) without a close male relative. This restriction was further expanded last week to include travelling abroad, and several solo women travellers were reportedly stopped from boarding flights. Similar bans were also introduced in several healthcare centres across the country, forbidding women to access healthcare without a mahram.

Iran – [Society Pushes for end to stadium ban](#)

Iranian authorities once again prevented women and girls from entering a sports stadium. Iran's football team played Lebanon in a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 qualifying match in the city of Mashhad last week. But authorities prevented dozens of women who had reportedly purchased tickets from entering the stadium. Additionally, videos circulating on social media suggested that some women outside the stadium were possibly attacked with pepper spray. Iranian women have been campaigning against the government's stadium ban for more than 15 years. Under pressure from Iranian women, in 2019 FIFA, football's governing body, finally set a deadline for Iranian authorities to allow women into stadiums. One month later, Iran's government permitted a limited number of women to attend a World Cup qualifier match at Azadi Stadium. Since then, Iranian officials have used various tactics to keep women from watching matches at stadiums.

Thursday
7 April 2022

Turkey – [Turkey suspends Khashoggi trial, transfers it to Saudi](#)

A Turkish court has ruled to suspend the trial in absentia of 26 Saudis accused in the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi and for the case to be transferred to Saudi Arabia. The decision came despite warnings from human rights groups that turning the case over to the kingdom would lead to a cover-up of the killing, which a 2018 US intelligence report had linked to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. "Transferring the Khashoggi trial from Turkey to Saudi Arabia would end any possibility of justice for him, and would reinforce Saudi authorities' apparent belief that they can get away with murder," Michael Page, deputy Middle East director at HRW, said in a statement.

Friday
8 April 2022

Egypt – [Prisons employ 'systemic sexual violence' against detainees](#)

"Systemic sexual violence" is being employed by Egyptian security personnel and prison staff against detainees as a method to coerce confessions and instil fear, a new report finds. The report, by the Freedom Initiative and the Egyptian Front for Human Rights, was published on Thursday and documents over 650 instances of sexual violence against detainees and their loved ones between 2015 and 2022, "in a widespread violation of human rights".

Saturday and Sunday
9 and 10 April 2022

Occupied Palestine – [Israeli forces kill Palestinian woman in the West Bank](#)

Israeli forces shot dead a Palestinian woman on Sunday near Bethlehem, the Palestinian health ministry said, as tensions heighten in Israel and the occupied West Bank. The ministry said the woman, identified as Ghada Ibrahim al-Aridi, a 47-year-old widowed mother of six from Husan village, west of Bethlehem, died in a hospital in the West Bank city of Beit Jala after suffering massive blood loss from a torn artery.



Monday
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Ukraine – [Ukraine : Apparent war crimes by Russian forces in Bucha must be investigated](#)

Following reports of apparent war crimes committed by Russian military forces against civilians in Bucha, Agnès Callamard, Secretary General of Amnesty International, said: "These reports from Bucha are showing a wider pattern of war crimes including extrajudicial executions and torture in other occupied areas of Ukraine. "We fear the violence suffered by civilians in Bucha at the hands of Russian soldiers is not unique. These incidents should be investigated as war crimes. "To date, Amnesty International has gathered evidence of civilians in Ukraine killed by indiscriminate attacks in Kharkiv and Sumy Oblast, documented an airstrike that killed civilians queueing for food in Chernihiv, and gathered evidence from civilians living under siege in Kharkiv, Izium and Mariupol." Later this week, Amnesty International will publish new testimony gathered during an on-the-ground investigation in a number of towns in the wider Kyiv region.

Ukraine – [Migrants, Asylum Seekers locked up in Ukraine](#)

Scores of migrants who had been arbitrarily detained in Ukraine remain locked up there and are at heightened risk amid the hostilities, including military activity in the vicinity, Human Rights Watch said today. Ukrainian authorities should immediately release migrants and asylum seekers detained due to their migration status and allow them to reach safety in Poland.

Canada – [Canada : jailing immigration detainees infringes on rights](#)

Canada's practice of incarcerating immigration detainees in provincial jails is inconsistent with international human rights standards, and jail conditions potentially breach federal-provincial immigration detention contracts, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said today. The groups released a legal memorandum about the practice, today, on Canada's Refugee Rights Day. Every year, Canada incarcerates hundreds of people on immigration-related grounds in dozens of provincial jails across the country, including in maximum-security facilities. People in immigration detention are regularly handcuffed, shackled, restricted to small spaces with rigid routines, and placed under constant surveillance. They are routinely held in the same wings and cells as people held on criminal charges or convictions.

UE/Vietnam – [UE : Press Vietnam to improve rights record](#)

The European Union should call on Vietnam to comply with its human rights obligations, end its crackdown on activists, and release all political prisoners, Human Rights Watch said today. A bilateral human rights dialogue between the EU and Vietnam is scheduled to be held in Brussels on April 6, 2022.

Australia – [How Australian universities are working to counter China's global attacks on academic freedom](#)

When international students arrived back on the University of Technology Sydney campus this semester, there was a minor but significant change to the standard 'O Week' session to orientate new students. Alongside newcomer tips for life in Australia – like "wear sunscreen" and "swim between the flags" – university administrators added a new warning informing students of their right to be free from any form of state-backed harassment or political intimidation. "Here in Australia, the culture, customs, and rules are different," the university advised students. "You can disagree about anything. You can have different opinions in class. You can write about your beliefs and opinions. You can show your beliefs in public."

USA – [New York attorney general urges justice department to probe anti-Muslim Group](#)

New York's attorney general has called on the US Justice Department to investigate whether an anti-Muslim group violated federal, criminal, and civil rights laws by spying on American Muslim groups. The attorney general also told Investigative Project on Terrorism to cease and desist 'ongoing or contemplated unlawful espionage operations against Muslims'.

Tuesday
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Sudan – [Darfur militia leader denies crimes against humanity at ICC](#)

Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-al-Rahman is accused of 31 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. A former militia leader in Sudan has denied committing war crimes and crimes against humanity as his landmark hearing opened at the international criminal court. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-al-Rahman is accused of leading thousands of pro-government fighters on a systematic campaign of murder, rape and torture during the height of violence in the Darfur region of Sudan between 2003 and 2004.

Central African Republic – [Russian mercenaries near Sudan accused of killing hundreds as African gold rush intensifies](#)

A recent spate of attacks purportedly carried out by Russian armed groups in a gold-mining area of Central African Republic (CAR) has left hundreds dead and sent thousands more fleeing over the border into Sudan. With the current war in Ukraine creating an acute need in Moscow for money and gold reserves, monitors believe Russian forces are aiming to expel miners from the region in order to then smuggle gold and diamonds back to Russia. Wagner Group fighters have also been pictured in eastern Ukraine.

Mexico – [Mexico bill would further endanger disability rights](#)

For the second time in less than six months, a prominent member of the majority party in the Mexican Senate has introduced a bill to amend the country's civil law framework with provisions that would further restrict the rights of people with disabilities. This proposed bill would amend the Federal Civil Code to introduce the concept of "differentiated capacity" and "differentiated support" in legal decision-making, authorizing judges and notaries public to determine whether a person with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities has the capacity to make legal decisions. Based on psychiatric and psychological evaluations of an individual to assess their capacity to independently engage in legal actions, these officials could appoint third persons or guardians to make decisions for a person without their consent. Currently, only judges can make this determination.

Nigeria – [Nigerian Atheist jailed for blasphemy over Facebook post](#)

A Nigerian court has sentenced an [atheist](#) to 24 years in prison for making social media posts it found to be blasphemous against Islam in the West African nation's northern region. Mubarak Bala, a former Muslim, was sentenced on Tuesday after pleading guilty to charges of blasphemy after a lengthy trial during which he spent nearly two years in prison.

Wednesday
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Sri Lanka – [Sri Lanka's poor queue for hours to buy kerosene amid crisis](#)

For months now, thousands of Sri Lankans have queued for fuel, cooking gas, food and medicine amid the country's worst economic crisis since independence in 1948, triggering spontaneous protests on the streets across the island demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Philippines – [Philippines: Elections must be 'game-changing' moment for human rights](#)

Upcoming elections next month should be a game-changing moment for human rights in the Philippines, Amnesty International said today, as it released an eight-point agenda urging all Presidential candidates to ensure that the protection of human rights is a core part of their plans. Following six years in which human rights significantly deteriorated and were repeatedly attacked by President Rodrigo Duterte's administration, the 9 May elections should be a moment to dramatically change course. "The forthcoming elections are set to be some of the most important in recent history, and we hope they will help pave the way for a radically different approach to human rights," said Erwin van der Borgh, Interim Regional Director for Amnesty International.

Thursday
7 April 2022

Greece – [Greece Using other migrants to expel asylum seekers](#)

Greek security forces are employing third country nationals, men who appear to be of Middle Eastern or South Asian origin, to push asylum seekers back at the Greece-Turkey land border, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. The 29-page report "Their Faces Were Covered: Greece's Use of Migrants as Police Auxiliaries in Pushbacks," found that Greek police are detaining asylum seekers at the Greece-Turkey land border at the Evros River, in many cases stripping them of most of their clothing and stealing their money, phones, and other possessions. They then turn the migrants over to masked men, who force them onto small boats, take them to the middle of the Evros River, and force them into the frigid water, making them wade to the riverbank on the Turkish side. None are apparently being properly registered in Greece or allowed to lodge asylum claims.

Friday
8 April 2022

Democratic Republic of Congo – [Congo jails 12 activist as repression intensifies in the East](#)

Last Friday, a military court in Beni, North Kivu province in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, sentenced 12 activists from the citizen movement Lucha (Lutte pour le Changement or Struggle for Change) to one year in prison for having participated in a peaceful demonstration last November.

Poland – [Poland Charges against activist accused of aiding an abortion must be dropped](#)

Charges against Justyna Wydrzyńska, a human rights defender who faces up to three years in prison for supporting a pregnant woman who needed a safe abortion in Poland, should be immediately dropped, Amnesty International said today ahead of the start of her trial in Warsaw tomorrow. In 2020, Justyna Wydrzyńska supported a pregnant woman, who said she had been suffering from domestic violence, to access abortion pills. The case marks the first in Europe in which an activist is being prosecuted for aiding an abortion by providing abortion pills. On 22 November 2021, she was charged with “helping with an abortion” and “possession of medicines without authorisation for the purpose of introducing them into the market”.

Cameroon – [Arbitrarily detained person dies of cholera in Douala, other detainees at risk](#)

At least six inmates at the New Bell prison in Douala have died of cholera since 18 February last. The latest, Rodrigue Ndagueho Koufet, who died on 7 April, had been held in arbitrary detention since September 2020 for being involved in peaceful protests. “The Cameroonian authorities must urgently take all necessary health measures to ensure that detainees suffering from cholera and other medical conditions have prompt access to adequate medical care,” said Samira Daoud, Amnesty International’s Regional Director for West and Central Africa.

Peru – [President Castillo must ensure proportionate use of force in response to social protests and prevent human rights violations](#)

Following a rise in the cost of food, fuel, and fertilizers, sectors of society linked to transport and agriculture have organized demonstrations in several regions of the country since 28 March. In many cases, these protests have consisted of roadblocks. On 5 April, the President suspended certain constitutional rights by means of a decree applicable in Lima and Callao and, in response, other sectors of the population organized new demonstrations. In addition, looting and acts of violence were reported in various parts of the country. “We are highlighting the risk of possible unnecessary or disproportionate use of force by law enforcement officials against demonstrators in a context of heightened tension. Amnesty International has documented serious human rights violations in the past in the context of social protests in Peru,” said Erika Guevara-Rosas, Americas Director at Amnesty International.

Ukraine – [UN condemns deadly attack on train station, dozens of civilians killed](#)

In eastern Ukraine, a reported Russian missile attack on a railway station that’s killed dozens of civilians including children, has been condemned by the United Nations. Secretary-General António Guterres said in a statement, that the strike - and others against civilians and civilian infrastructure - were “gross violations” of international law.

Saturday and Sunday
9 and 10 April 2022

United States – [Asylum Seekers Face Real Harm from US Border Policy](#)

Following the Biden administration’s recent announcement that it would rescind an abusive Trump-era summary expulsion policy in May, the US states of Arizona, Louisiana, and Missouri this week sued to force the administration to continue turning asylum seekers away at the border. In the same vein as alarmist and xenophobic rhetoric and policies seen in Texas, the states claim that giving people a fair shot at protection will cause “calamity ... chaos and catastrophe.” The hyperbole appears designed to conceal abuse and legal misdirection. The real harms are faced by people expelled from the United States, with no chance to explain their situation or seek review.

Tunisia – [Protesters take to streets calling for end to president Saied’s rule](#)

Hundreds of Tunisians took to the streets on Sunday in protest against an ongoing power grab by President Kais Saied, and his proposed constitutional reforms. Demonstrations in the capital Tunis were organised by the largest parliamentary party Ennahda and a movement named Citizens Against the Coup. Amid rising public anger against the political class last year, on 25 July, Saied sacked the government, froze the parliament, and seized wide-ranging powers. He later gave himself powers to rule and legislate by decree and seized control over the judiciary. “The people want to dismiss the president,” the crowds chanted, many waving national flags.