



# HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

18 - 24 July, 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**  
18 July 2022

### **Lebanon – [Kafala system in Lebanon: “Modern-day slavery”](#)**

The Kafala system in Lebanon is trapping thousands of domestic workers in “highly abusive conditions” according to right groups, and the country’s financial crisis has exacerbated their suffering. Domestic workers spend tons of years in the country working for Lebanese families to help with different household duties and end up returning to their home countries without any money. Without any legal background many of these workers are left vulnerable to abuse with nowhere to turn. The high degree of control over workers’ lives under the Kafala system has led to cases of human trafficking, forced labor, and exploitation within others.

### **Lebanon – [TV presenter suggests Syrian refugees should leave Lebanon](#)**

Talk show host Dalia Ahmad on Friday suggested that Syrian refugees should leave Lebanon because of the burden they were placing on the country. Ahmad said that Lebanon could no longer bear the burden of refugees after “sharing everything with the Syrians for 11 years”, she stated that Lebanese people had nothing else to share with Syrians except departing Lebanon.

**Tuesday**  
19 July 2022

### **Lebanon – [Alarming statement by the Minister of the displaced Issa Charafeddine on the government’s plan to repatriate Syrian Refugees residing in Lebanon](#)**

On July 4, 2022, Lebanese Caretaker Minister of the Displaced Issam Charafeddine announced to the media the government’s plan for the repatriation of Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon. According to his statement, 15,000 refugees will be returned to Syria every month, although no details were provided regarding how this large number of returns will be achieved. Moreover, the Minister stated that a special tripartite committee with Syria and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) will be formed to oversee the process as well as a four-way committee with Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey.

**Friday**  
22 July 2022

### **Lebanon – [UN humanitarian coordinator issues statement amid increasing ‘negative sentiments and hatred’ towards Syrian refugees](#)**

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon Najat Rochdi issued a statement calling for “everyone to refrain from fueling the media and social media with negative sentiments and hatred,” against Syrian refugees. While Lebanon is not a signatory to the international 1951 Refugee Convention, it is a signatory to the United Nations Convention Against Torture, which prohibits forcibly returning a person to a country where they would be in danger of torture. The international principle of non-refoulement also generally prohibits forcible return of any person who might be at risk of persecution, torture, or threat to life.



## REGIONAL

Middle East

**Monday**  
18 July 2022

**Syria – [Australian teenager Yusuf Zahab dies in Syrian prison](#)**

Yusuf Zahab, who was taken to Syria when he was 11, died in Kurdish-held prison months after pleading for help. He died from unknown causes after being “wrongfully detained” for years in al Sina’a prison run by the United States-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, which holds Syrian and foreign ISIL (ISIS) suspects. He was separated from his mother at the age of 14 and put in a man’s prison full of inhuman conditions.

**Egypt – [21 human rights organizations call on German ministers to press for the opening of civic space and the release of prisoners in Egypt ahead of COP27](#)**

21 Human Rights organizations call on President Al-Sisi to take measures and release all the individuals arbitrarily detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, associations and peaceful assembly. Since all of these are necessary to guarantee the survival of independent civil society in Egypt and promote its resurgence.

**Tuesday**  
19 July 2022

**Morocco – [Uyghur Activist at Risk of Extradition](#)**

After arriving in Morocco on a flight from Turkey, Aishan (Uyghur activist) was arrested on the night of July 19-20, 2021 on the basis of what is known as a red notice issued by Interpol at the request of China, “for belonging to a terrorist organization”. On July 20, 2021, he was taken to the Casablanca Court of First Instance, which ordered him to be remanded in custody in Tiflet prison, for which he remained in detention. On December 15, 2021, the Court issued a favorable ruling on the extradition request, despite the fact that Interpol cancelled in August 2021 the red notice issued against Aishan on the grounds that it violated its statutes and that Aishan had filed a request for refugee status with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This would be contrary to Morocco’s international obligations, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

**Thursday**  
21 July 2022

**Tunisia – [Urgently reverse alarming backsliding on human rights](#)**

A new briefing details how President Saied has dismantled or weakened key safeguards for human rights since consolidating power last July, despite repeatedly pledging to ensure that authorities respect human rights. The Tunisian authorities must urgently address the country’s worrying human rights record, which has been significantly eroded in the year since President Kais Saied claimed sweeping powers on 25 July 2021.

**Friday**  
22 July 2022

**Saudi Arabia – [Saudi citizen arrested, referred to Public Prosecution for helping non-Muslim illegally enter Makkah: SPA](#)**

A Saudi citizen was arrested and has been referred to the Public Prosecution for facilitating the entry of a non-Muslim journalist into Makkah, violating the country’s law that prohibits non-Muslims from entering the city. Makkah region’s police has referred a citizen to the Public Prosecution, who was a complicit in transferring and facilitating the entry of a (non-Muslim) journalist [who] holds the citizenship of the United States of America to the holy city of Makkah by passing through a path dedicated for Muslims only in an explicit violation of the laws that prohibit entry to Makkah for non-Muslims,” the SPA statement said. Therefore, he was apprehended, and legal action was taken against him.

**Syria and Iraq – [Tehran Summit does not stop the Killing of civilians in Syria and Iraq](#)**

The Tehran summit’s tripartite cooperation that brought together Iran, Russia and Turkey only resulted in more civilian casualties in Iraq and Syria. The Russian Air Force launched a series of raids targeting the town of Al-Jadida in the Jisr Al-Shughur countryside, west of Idlib, Syria, killing seven people, including four young siblings. The Russian raid was preceded by an Israeli raid at dawn, targeting the Syrian capital’s vicinity, another symbol of the summit’s failure to calm the situation in the country.

**Saturday and Sunday**  
23 and 24 July 2022

### **Middle East – [The Human Rights Price of Biden's Visit to Jeddah](#)**

Biden Should Keep Promise on Rights, Call for Release of Activists and Rights Defenders. United States President Joe Biden vowed on the campaign trail to make Saudi Arabia a “pariah” over its pervasive human rights abuses. Fast forward two years and he is fist bumping Saudi’s de facto ruler. Biden’s new stance comes at a cost to the moral authority of the US. It is also a devastating blow for independent Saudi dissidents and activists demanding a meaningful say in their country’s future. Since MBS became the de facto ruler of the Saudi Arabia in 2017, citizens have experienced the worst period of repression in their modern history. Authorities have conducted waves of arrests targeting political dissidents, public intellectuals, and human rights activists. Practices include holding people at unofficial detention sites where detainees are subjected to torture and mistreatment, prolonged arbitrary detention, asset confiscation without any clear legal process, the use of digital surveillance technology to target peaceful dissidents, and extraterritorial repression. All without meaningful accountability.

### **Syria – [Attack on Syria church gathering kills 2: state media](#)**

Two people were killed and 12 injured Sunday by bombardment of a church as it was being inaugurated in Syria’s central province of Hama, the official SANA news agency reported. “A rocket fired by terrorist organizations targeted a religious gathering in the town of Al-Suqaylabiyah near Hama, killing two people and wounding 12”. The attack came during a ceremony to inaugurate the Ayia Sofia church.

### **Occupied Palestine – [Gaza's women and girls see no escape from violence](#)**

Seventeen-year-old Istabraq Baraka fell pregnant soon after her wedding in the Gaza Strip. Three months later her husband killed her. “She died from a severe beating, which caused bleeding on the brain and lungs and broken ribs, women can consider violence from their husbands normal behavior in Gaza’s patriarchal society, which has been controlled by the Hamas Islamist group since 2007. Some women don’t know their rights and some others are afraid of going to court, for lack of family support. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics said 38 percent of women in Gaza faced physical or psychological violence from their husbands in 2019, but Alwakil estimated the true figure to be far higher.

### **Yemen – [UN Yemen envoy condemns Houthi attack on children in Taiz](#)**

The UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg condemned on Sunday a Houthi attack that hit a residential neighborhood in Taiz. The Houthi attack injured 11 boys and girls, mostly under the age of 10, and one of the boys later died of his injuries. Some of the children are in critical condition. “The warring parties have obligations under international law to protect civilians. The killing and injuring of children is particularly reprehensible. The people of Taiz have suffered immensely through seven years of war, and they, too, need the truce to deliver for them in all its aspects.

### **Yemen – [Houthis commit 277 violations of UN truce in 48 hours](#)**

The Houthi militia has been accused of committing 277 breaches of the UN-brokered truce in the span of 48 hours across several Yemeni cities. At least 12 army personnel were killed, and 19 others were injured as a result of the violations, according to state news agency SABA referring to the Yemeni army.

The Military Forces’ Media Center reported that 109 breaches were committed in areas located in southern Hodeida, 51 in Hajjah, 42 in Barh Military Pivot in western Taiz, 37 in Taiz Pivot, 24 in the southern, western and north-eastern parts of Marib, seven in Hazm Jawf, four in Dhale and three in Sa’adah’s warfronts. The Houthis also attempted to gain access to a military location in Dhale by shelling army posts using mortars and heavy fires.



**Monday**  
18 July 2022

### **USA – [Judge blocks enforcement of pre-Roe abortion ban in West Virginia](#)**

A judge in West Virginia has blocked authorities in the US state from enforcing an abortion ban that dates back to the 1800s, as fierce legal battles continue following the United States Supreme Court's decision last month to overturn the landmark Roe v Wade abortion ruling. Rights advocates have argued that abortion bans will disproportionately harm Black people and low-income Americans. Abortion services are essential health care, and the state's most vulnerable residents are put at risk every day that they do not have access to that care.

### **Afghanistan – [Afghan refugees protest delayed visas at US embassy in Madagascar](#)**

Afghan refugees living in the east African island nation say they lack basic support and want to be relocated to the US. Those refugees that have gathered in protest outside the US embassy say that they have worked in support of either NATO forces or US and foreign companies and as a result, faced Taliban retribution if they return to their home country. The UN has said that while Madagascar offers refugees and asylum seekers protection from expulsion or forced return to their home countries, it has no law to provide them with social support, work authorization, or healthcare.

### **El Salvador – [Transgender People Denied Equal Rights](#)**

Transgender people in EL Salvador experience significant discrimination in daily life because there is no procedure for legal gender recognition. A report made exposes the pervasive discrimination that trans people experience due to a mismatch between their gender and their identity documents. The researchers focused on discrimination in four key areas: health, employment, voting, and banking.

### **India – [Sedition law: Why India should break from Britain's abusive legacy](#)**

The colonial-era statute is clear violation of right to free expression. Britain's legacy in India includes abusive laws to suppress any opposition to colonial rule. Chief among those is sedition, the law used by the British to imprison Indian nationalists including Mohandas Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. If parliament does not act, it will be up to the Supreme Court to rule on the constitutionality of the law and ensure India's compliance with international human rights law, which the sedition law plainly violates.

### **Worldwide – [UN publishes new guidance on curbing child abduction and other 'grave violations' in war](#)**

The UN's top official advocating for children caught up in armed conflict issued new guidance on Monday designed to help expert staff on the ground protect children who are abducted, or who suffer other grave violations. The abduction of children in conflict situations is often linked with other grave violations against children.

### **Thailand – [Pegasus spyware found on phones of dissidents involved in mass protests](#)**

Thailand must thoroughly investigate the use of the invasive Pegasus spyware found on the phones of dozens of activists, after a new report identified 30 people who were targeted or infected with the harmful software, the first time its use in the country has been confirmed through technical analysis. We can now officially add Thailand to the growing list of countries where people peacefully calling for change, expressing an opinion, or discussing government policies may trigger invasive surveillance with a profound toll on an individual's freedom of expression, privacy, and sense of security.

**Tuesday**  
19 July 2022

### **Malaysia – [New sexual harassment bill edges closer to law in Malaysia](#)**

A university student was feeling a persistent pain along her arm and went to the campus clinic. When she laid on the examination bed, the medic asked her to unbutton the top of her dress; followed by the medic telling her she had beautiful breasts, kissing one and squeezing her nipples. Reports of sexual harassment are not uncommon in Malaysia, but despite the existence of various legal mechanisms, many women say effective redress is still lacking.

Wednesday  
20 July 2022

#### **Thailand – [Free Detained Critics of Monarchy](#)**

Activists on Hunger Strike, Facing Lengthy Pretrial Detention. Two of the activists have been on a hunger strike since June 2, 2022 to protest their pretrial detention at Bangkok's Central Women Correctional Institution. Pending their release, they should immediately be transferred to a hospital where they can receive appropriate medical attention. Thai authorities should immediately drop the charges and release pro-democracy activists detained for insulting the monarchy.

#### **USA – [Kansas to vote on abortion rights in first statewide test after Roe's demise](#)**

A fight over abortion access in Middle America is roiling the hills and plains of Kansas, where voters will decide whether the state's constitution should go on protecting the right to terminate a pregnancy.

#### **USA – [‘I will never stop telling my story’: Confronting victim-blaming for sexual assault](#)**

More than one-third of the world's population, have survived sexual violence. A sexual violence survivor won't stop telling her story; she wants to spread the injustice of sexual violence, and how it is present across all cultures and underscores that what a victim is wearing, should have no bearing in the investigation of a heinous crime. Sexual violence is a universal issue that demands greater international recognition.

#### **Afghanistan – [Report highlights multiple human rights violations and abuses under Taliban](#)**

A new report from the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released on Wednesday, confirms the erosion of basic human rights across the country since the Taliban takeover in August last year, pointing out they bear responsibility for extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and violations of fundamental freedoms.

#### **Poland – [Authorities must stop hateful rhetoric against LGBTI people and act to protect them from violence and discrimination](#)**

Polish authorities have targeted LGBTI people with stigmatizing and harmful rhetoric, and refused or frustrated their attempts to protest, Amnesty International Poland has found in a new report.

#### **Sri Lanka – [Emergency regulations must not lead to further crackdown on human rights](#)**

On 17 July 2022, a proclamation of emergency was brought into force by the then acting President of Sri Lanka. On the next day, Government of Sri Lanka issued notification under Public Security Ordinance for the Emergency (Miscellaneous Provisions and Powers) Regulations, 2022. Two days later, a court in Colombo issued an order prohibiting people from assembling in certain areas of what has been a peaceful protest site since April 2022. The Sri Lankan authorities have carried out a number of arrests of largely peaceful demonstrators since the beginning of the current wave of protests in Sri Lanka. Torture or other ill-treatment in custody in Sri Lanka has been documented before by Amnesty International in Mirihana.

Thursday  
21 July 2022

#### **Malawi – [Dozens of Malawians arrested in anti-‘selective justice’ protests](#)**

Police in Malawi's capital Lilongwe have arrested 75 people including human rights campaigners during a clampdown on protests against “selective justice” by the country's judiciary. The arrests followed a last-minute high court injunction that attempted to ban the demonstrations.

#### **Indonesia – [Indonesian Women Speak Out on Dress Codes](#)**

Schoolgirls, Female Civil Servants Suffer Under Mandatory Hijab Regulations. Most of Indonesia's provinces and dozens of cities and regencies impose discriminatory and abusive dress codes on women and girls. The harmful impact of these regulations is evident in the personal accounts of Indonesian women – as schoolgirls, teachers, doctors, and the like.

#### **Yemen – [Release arbitrarily detained journalist: Younis Abdelsalam](#)**

Journalist Younis Abdelsalam has been arbitrarily detained without charge by the Huthi de facto authorities for almost a year. He was falsely accused of communicating with foreign entities. Following his arrest, he was subjected to enforced disappearance for several weeks and then held incommunicado for at least three months.

#### **Ethiopia – [Authorities must investigate massacre of ethnic Amhara in Tole](#)**

The Ethiopian authorities must urgently launch an impartial investigation into the summary killing of over 400 Amhara residents of Tole Kebele in Oromia region on 18 June; most of them were mothers and children who were unable to flee the attackers.

#### **Afghanistan – [Lynne O'Donnell: Taliban detained, abused and threatened me](#)**

An Australian journalist says she was forced to publicly retract some of her reports about Afghanistan after being threatened with prison by the Taliban. Since regaining power last year, the Taliban have also been tightening restrictions on women. They are banned from travelling without a male guardian and secondary schools are shut for girls.

Friday  
22 July 2022

### **Nigeria – Killed for blasphemy in Nigeria: 'It felt like a spear pierced my heart'**

A mob killed Deborah Samuel was a 21-year-old Christian student in a college in northern Nigeria. They accused her of insulting Islam in a WhatsApp voice note. Videos of her brutal killing were shared on social media. This started a discussion and reignited the debate on blasphemy laws in the country. Nigeria is a secular country, with a deeply religious society. Federal law sets a maximum two-years prison sentence for “public insult of the religion”.

### **Ukraine – Torture, Disappearances in Occupied South**

Apparent war crimes by Russian Forces in Kherson, Zaporizhzhia Regions. Russian forces have tortured, unlawfully detained, and forcibly disappeared civilians in the occupied areas of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. Russian forces have also tortured prisoners of war (POWs) held there.

### **UK – Tackling Violence against Some Women, But Not All**

Government Set to Exclude Migrant Women in Ratification of Key Treaty. The United Kingdom government is set to tarnish its own landmark advancement on violence against women by excluding migrant women from key protections. This perpetuates longstanding barriers for migrant women whose residency status depends on their abusers, as they may fear expulsion from the UK if they seek help for domestic violence.

### **Papua New Guinea – UN condemns election-related violence across Papua New Guinea Highlands**

The UN Country Team called for an “immediate cessation” to the election-related violence amidst a deteriorating security situation in the Highlands region of the southwest Pacific island, with Government sources confirming “deaths, assaults, rape, and the extensive destruction of property and infrastructure”.

### **Singapore – Fifth execution in under four months carried out**

Five people have been hanged this year in Singapore, in a period of less than four months. This relentless wave of hangings must stop immediately. The use of the death penalty in Singapore, including as mandatory punishment for drug-related offences, violates international human rights law and standards.

### **Myanmar – 'I can't forget her'- Myanmar's soldiers admit atrocities**

Soldiers in the Myanmar military have admitted to killing, torturing and raping civilians in exclusive interviews with the BBC. For the first time they have given detailed accounts of widespread human rights abuses they say they were ordered to conduct.

### **Sri Lanka – Security Forces Assault Peaceful Protesters**

In the early hours of July 22, 2022, Sri Lankan security forces forcibly dispersed people at a peaceful protest site and assaulted protesters in central Colombo, injuring more than 50 people and arresting at least 9 others. President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who took office on July 21, should immediately order the security forces to cease all unlawful use of force against protesters, release everyone arbitrarily detained, and investigate and appropriately prosecute those responsible for abuses.

### **Kyrgyzstan – 2 Years On, No Justice for Azimjon Askarov**

Kyrgyz authorities have yet to conclude an effective investigation into the death of the human rights defender Azimjon Askarov or provide redress for his decade of wrongful imprisonment, Human Right watch said today as the second anniversary of his death nears. The unresolved deaths in custody of two men in June 2022 raise renewed concerns over allegations of mistreatment and neglect in detention in Kyrgyzstan.

### **Mexico – Mother of Child with Autism Killed after Seeking Help from Authorities**

Mexican State Should Expand Laws on Hate Crimes Based on Disability. Luz Raquel Padilla Gutiérrez, 35, was burned alive after a group of people doused her with alcohol and lit her on fire at a park near her home in Zapopan, Jalisco state, Mexico. Her brutal murder appears to be a horrific example at the extreme end of the disability hate spectrum. Luz reported being threatened by a neighbor because he didn't like the noises her son made during crises. She also said the neighbor had attacked her with industrial bleach. Despite the reported threats, physical violence, and signs of escalation, the Zapopan authorities denied her request. “Disability hate” exists on a spectrum that ranges from giving dirty looks – for occupying too much space in public transportation or for looking and acting differently from others – to committing criminal acts against someone because they have a disability, are perceived as having a disability, or are associated with someone with a disability.

**Saturday and Sunday**  
23 and 24 July 2022

**Ukraine – Victims of war crimes in Ukraine have an unprecedented chance to seek justice**

One victim spoke calmly about the Russian soldiers, her younger son's age, who raped her and her friend in a small village outside of Kyiv. When her friend's husband tried to stop them, they shot him dead. I asked whether she wanted to pursue the case in court, and she did not hesitate. Many survivors of atrocities may not be aware of the legal intricacies involved in holding perpetrators to account, or how long this journey may take, but they immediately understand the importance of seeking justice. Unless the perpetrators are held to account, they say, they can't turn the page. Using justice mechanisms to punish those who commit atrocity crimes is neither easy nor quick but, most importantly, it is impossible without the survivors themselves.