



► What are human rights?

Human rights represent a fundamental area of international law which developed following the atrocities committed during World War I and II. Amongst the first instruments is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - championed by Eleanor Roosevelt – marking the first time that a statement existed that human rights do not simply belong to the national level but exist on the international plane as well. Subsequently, human rights were defined internationally as we know them today – rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of the nationality, place of residence, sex, national/ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status without discrimination. These rights are all universal, inalienable, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. They are subject to national implementation and international protection. Therefore, it remains the responsibility of states to act in certain ways or to refrain from certain acts, in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals or groups.



LOCAL

Monday
17 May 2021

Lebanon – [‘I want to study’: Lebanon crisis cancels school for many](#)

A new reportage of “The daily star” denounced what several rights groups are calling “an education catastrophe”, especially affecting refugees who already struggled to access learning before the pandemic. Many children living in the camps for Syrian refugees in east Lebanon are risking to be out of school for a third consecutive year because they cannot reach the remote learning.

South of Lebanon – [Israel Fires Shells at South Lebanon after Rocket Fire](#)

The Israeli army launched artillery towards Lebanon in response to rocket fire from the Lebanese side that failed to hit Israel.

Lebanon – [Authorities put off the elections of the Order of Engineers and Architects](#)

The elections of the Order of Engineers and Architects in Beirut were postponed for the sixth time due to ruling parties' concerns and this is preventing “engineers and architects from exercising their rights, making their voices heard, changing the order's course and freeing it from the control of ruling parties”.

Lebanon – [Queer stories, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia](#)

On the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the queer community has succeeded in creating safe spaces which allow LGBTQI+ people to tell their stories and counter the system's narratives.

Tuesday
18 May 2021

South of Lebanon – [Israeli forces wound 5 protesters near border](#)

The National News Agency reported that five individuals protesting on the Lebanon-Israel border against air strikes in Gaza were wounded by tear gas canisters and smoke bombs fired by Israeli forces in response to the throwing of stones.

Lebanon – [Nine activists absolved by the Military Court](#)

The Military Court absolved nine activists who were charged for their participation to anti-governmental protests in January 2020. Among them, the activists Amer el-Jamal, Dany Mourtada and the dancer Alexandre Paulikevitch.

Lebanon – [First step towards Independent Judiciary Law](#)

The Head of the Justice and Administration Committee, Mr. Georges Adwan, announced that the Independent Judiciary draft law is completed, to be soon transferred to the Parliament. According to the new draft, 7 members of the Higher Judicial Council shall be chosen by judges and no more by political authorities.

Wednesday
19 May 2021

Lebanon – [« We order 10 boxes of medicines and we get only one »](#)

Pharmacies are facing several restrictions in the country. Many medicines are not available for customers, even though stocks are sent by the importers.

Beirut – [Imad Othman's convoy fires shots](#)

The security convoy of Major General Imad Othman, General Director of Internal Security, fired shots at the tires of a woman's car who was driving down the road in Corniche al-Mazraa as the convoy passed.

Thursday
20 May 2021

Beirut – [Protesters assault Syrians heading to Beirut Embassy to vote – Al-Assad's elections in Lebanon: thuggery, assaults and racism](#)

Some protesters, probably supporters of the Lebanese Forces, blocked off and assaulted buses and cars carrying scores of Syrians heading to their embassy to vote in Syria's presidential election. Other similar incidents happened in several areas of the capital and in many regions of the country.

Municipality of Ferzol – [CLDH reported Melhem Ghassan for human rights violations](#)

CLDH reported Mr. Melhem Ghassan, Head of the Municipality of Ferzol, to the Public Prosecutor's Office, for inciting sectarian tensions, violating the Constitution and the Labor Code, exploiting women and human trafficking.

Friday
21 May 2021

Tripoli – [Grenades, Unrest as Tensions Linked to Syrian Vote Spread to Tripoli](#)

In Tripoli several security incidents in connection with the Lebanese-Syrian unrest happened, including the burning of the office of the Kataeb party and a clinic affiliated to the Lebanese Forces with Molotov cocktails, and the use of a grenade in the area between al-Qobbeh and Bab al-Tabbaneh, injuring two people.

Beirut – [Sit-in of parents of students abroad in front of the Bank of Lebanon](#)

The Lebanese Association of Parents of Students in Foreign Universities held a sit-in in front of the Bank of Lebanon to demand the implementation of the student dollar law. This law should allow them to transfer funds to their children enrolled in universities abroad, in a context of strict banking restrictions imposed since the beginning of the economic crisis.

Saturday and Sunday
22 and 23 May 2021

Lebanon – [In the Lebanese advertising landscape, the degrading image of women](#)

A study conducted by the Lebanese American University reveals that the likelihood of portraying women as sex objects, perfect housewives, gentle and docile, in advertising is twice as high as for men.

Beirut – [Moucharrafiyé wants the social safety net for the Lebanese to be sustainable](#)

The outgoing Minister of Social Affairs and Tourism reaffirmed the Lebanese state's determination to establish a "sustainable" social safety net for the Lebanese and praised the efforts of donor countries, the World Bank and the World Food Program to support the poverty alleviation program, which aims to help nearly 750,000 Lebanese families



Monday
17 May 2021

Egypt – [Prisoner's Family Detained for Torture Complaints](#)

HRW called for the immediate release of Ms. Hoda Abdel Hamid, apparently detained solely for filing a complaint about the alleged torture and sexual assault of her detained son.

Iran – [Murder of gay man highlights dangers of state-sanctioned abuses against LGBTI people](#)

Amnesty International denounced that the horrifying murder of the 20-year-old gay man has shed new light on how the criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual conduct and gender non-conformity perpetuates systemic violence and discrimination in the country.

Morocco / Spain – [Migrants, refugees swim from Morocco to Spain's Ceuta enclave](#)

The local authorities of the Spanish enclave of Ceuta declared that around 3,000 migrants and refugees, including 1,000 children, swam from Morocco's beaches in a perilous journey; some of them used swimming rings and rubber dinghies.

Occupied Palestine – [Is international law respected in the Israel-Palestine conflict? – Pattern of Israeli attacks on residential homes in Gaza must be investigated as war crimes](#)

Israel declares it is targeting tunnels and military facilities in self-defense following rocket attacks by Palestinian factions. Nevertheless, according to the UN, the right to self-defense belongs only to people living under occupation.

Palestine (Gaza Strip) – [‘We need food’: Palestinians displaced in Gaza call for supplies – Gaza facing water, power crisis after deadly Israeli attacks lift death toll to 200 – Message from Gaza: This is What is Happening to Us Right Now. Be Honest](#)

The relentless bombardment severely hit power, water and sanitation services in Gaza, raising fears of a humanitarian crisis for the 2 million people living there. The UN said around 38,000 Palestinians have been internally displaced as Israel continues its intense bombardment of the territory.

Yemen – [Houthi leader kills cardiologist, his brother for opposing mosque sermon](#)

A Houthi religious leader killed a cardiologist and his brother and wounded several others for denouncing his sermons at a mosque in the southern province of Taiz.

Tuesday
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Afghanistan – [Joint call for an immediate end to attacks against human rights defenders](#)

Amnesty International, along with other human rights organizations, called the government to put an end to the threats, harassment, intimidation and attacks against human rights defenders, activists, journalists and media workers in the country.

Occupied Palestine (West Bank) – [Israeli forces kill Palestinian protester in occupied West Bank](#)

A Palestinian 25-year-old man was killed and dozens wounded by Israeli gunfire during clashes at the Beit El military checkpoint near Ramallah. Two Israeli soldiers were also reported to be injured.

Sudan – [Lethal Force Used Against Protesters](#)

HRW condemned the excessive and lethal use of force by the Security Forces against peaceful protesters gathered in the capital Khartoum last week, to commemorate victims of a 2019 deadly crackdown.

Wednesday
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Palestine (Gaza Strip) – [Ceasefire elusive as Israel continues to pound Gaza – The children who have died in the conflict](#)

Israeli forces jets continued to pummel the Gaza Strip, flattening residential buildings and killing four Palestinians, including a journalist. At least 219 Palestinians, including 63 children, have been killed in Gaza since May 10.

Iran – [Iranian film director murdered by family in so-called ‘honor killing’](#)

Mr. Babak Khorramdin, an Iranian 47-year-old film director who spent time working in London, was the victim of a so-called “honor killing” after an argument with his father over his unmarried status. His body was cut up and left in the trash in Ekbatan, western Tehran.

Morocco – [Drop charges against teachers who peacefully protested over workers' rights](#)

Amnesty International called for the immediate drop of the charges against the group of 33 teachers who were arbitrarily arrested for participating in peaceful demonstrations to demand better working conditions.

Palestine (Gaza Strip) – [Airstrikes kill six in Gaza as relentless Israeli bombardment continues](#) – [Survivors of Israeli air attacks recount grief and loss](#) – [‘This time is different’: Gaza journalists on Israeli bombardment](#) – [Eleven children killed in Gaza were part of a program helping them with trauma](#)

At least six people died in airstrikes, as the relentless Israeli bombardment entered its 10th consecutive day. The Palestinian Ministry of Health declared that 227 Palestinians, including 64 children and 38 women, have been killed since the beginning of the fighting. Several Palestinian journalists are talking about their fear and the exhaustion of covering the continuing Israeli bombardment, as well as their determination to continue their work.

Qatar – [Concerns over Qatar’s arrest of Kenyan security guard](#)

Several rights groups expressed their concerns for a Kenyan security guard working in Doha who is still in detention two weeks after his arrest, and denounced the lack of information and clarity on the charges surrounding his arrest.

Occupied Palestine – [Israel, Hamas cease fire but Jerusalem clashes break out](#) – [‘We don’t sleep’: Sheikh Jarrah Palestinians decry harassment](#)

Israel announced a cease-fire in the brutal 11-day conflict that left a swathe of devastation in Gaza and has killed hundreds of people. However, brief clashes broke out around Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem where similar scenes had touched off the Gaza conflict. The situation in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood is still tense.

Occupied Palestine / United Nations – [Special Session must address violations in Israel/OPT](#)

Amnesty International welcomed the news that the UN Human Rights Council has today announced it will hold a special session to address the deteriorating situation across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 27 May.

Turkey – [Submission to the UN Human Rights Committee](#)

Ahead of the adoption of the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for the third periodic report of Turkey, Amnesty International provided the UN Human Rights Committee with a list of recent reports covering violations of the right to life and the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, as well as prevailing impunity in the country.

Turkey – [Osman Kavala: Prominent Turkish philanthropist’s retrial begins](#)

The Turkish philanthropist Osman Kavala, who faces trial alongside 15 others, returns to court on charges of espionage and attempting to overthrow the constitutional order in a failed military coup in 2016. Kavala remains in pre-trial detention in a high-security prison for nearly four years and has become an emblem of the political repression.

Palestine (Gaza Strip) – [UN says war took toll on Gaza clean water access](#)

The UN says approximately 800,000 people in Gaza do not have regular access to clean piped water, as nearly 50 percent of the water network was damaged since May 10 as well as 53 education facilities, six hospitals and 11 primary health care centers.

Algeria – [Hundreds arrested as Algeria cracks down on protest movement](#)

Several hundred protesters were arrested in Algeria as the crackdown intensifies on pro-democracy Hirak movement by authorities.

Syria / Iraq – [Return of Iraqis seen by US as easing threat from Syria camp](#)

The Iraqi government for the first time is expected to bring home about 100 Iraqi families from the al-Hol camp, hosting more than 70,000 people - mostly women and children - displaced by the civil war in Syria.

Occupied Palestine – [Backed by Israeli police, Jewish settlers enter Al-Aqsa compound](#)

Dozens of Jewish settlers, flanked by heavily armed Israeli special forces, entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem, raising tensions hours after Palestinian worshippers were beaten and assaulted by Israeli police.

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INTERNATIONAL

Monday
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Ethiopia – [People face 'horrific' situation in Ethiopia's Tigray: WHO chief](#)

The World Health Organization Director-General, Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, denounced that the conflict-hit Tigray region is facing a "horrific" situation with people dying of hunger, health services destroyed and violence increased.

Mongolia – [Mongolia heads for elections under shadow of crackdown on political opponents](#)

Amnesty International is concerned for the upcoming presidential election which will take place in June 2021 amid a worrying human rights situation in the country where the right to freedom of expression is severely restricted, especially of those who speak critically about government actions.

Peru – [New evidence confirms health crisis due to toxic metals in Espinar](#)

Amnesty International released a new report and denounced that members of the Indigenous K'ana People's communities in Espinar province have high levels of metals and toxic substances in their bodies and the government is failing in its obligation to guarantee their right to health.

South Sudan – [UN must not lift South Sudan arms embargo until human rights benchmarks are met](#)

As a UN Security Council vote shall decide the future of the embargo on South Sudan, Amnesty International warned that lifting it could have "dire consequences for human rights".

Worldwide – [Pandemic's Dire Global Impact on Education](#)

HRW published a 125-page report on the increased inequalities in children's rights to education as an effect of the COVID 19 pandemic. The study shows how the school closures affected children unequally, as not all children had the opportunities, tools, or access needed to access the online learning.

Tuesday
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Bangladesh – [Journalist is facing death penalty for COVID reporting](#)

The prominent investigative journalist, Ms. Rozina Islam, has been arrested for allegedly "stealing" government documents related to COVID 19 situation in the country. She is currently at risk of death sentence. Several journalists organized human chains, boycotted government press conferences, and protested outside the Health Ministry in support of their colleague.

China / United States of America – [Pelosi calls for China Winter Olympics boycott](#)

The US House Speaker, Ms. Nancy Pelosi, called for a diplomatic boycott of 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing due to concerns over the respect of human rights in China.

Europe – [Europe's Worrying Surge of Antisemitism](#)

Among the supporters of Palestinians' rights, some are using human rights abuses by the Israeli state as cover for hatred of Jews everywhere. Several Palestinian activists and rights groups condemned this antisemitism and called on European leaders to protect Jewish communities in their country.

Greece – [Women and children at risk as MPs vote on law which would breach Istanbul Convention](#)

Amnesty International called on the Parliament to reject the proposed changes of the Civil Code that would allow perpetrators of domestic violence or sexual offences to retain child custody until they are convicted by a first instance court.

Malaysia – [Free Speech Under Increasing Threat](#)

HRW denounced that the authorities are increasingly using criminal investigations to harass journalists, protest leaders, and various other critics of the government. Many of them are facing potential prosecution and have been subject to police questioning about their work.

Poland – [Poland ranked again the worst EU country for LGBTQ people](#)

According to the latest "Rainbow Europe" ranking, Poland is still the worst country in the European Union regarding LGBTQ people's rights and the "social climate" they face. Also, last year several small towns across the country declared themselves free of "LGBTQ ideology".

Russia – [Parliamentarians must reject new bills threatening freedom of association and expression](#)

Three bills were adopted today in the first reading by the State Duma (lower chamber). These bills drastically restrict rights and liberties in the country by imposing new muzzles on those who criticize the government and barring them from participating in public life.

United Kingdom – [Dozens of EU citizens arbitrarily detained at UK borders](#)

Within the framework of the British government's controversial "hostile environment policy", dozens EU citizens have been held for days in immigration removal centers and airport detention rooms after attempting to enter the country without work visas or residency status.

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Belarus – [Belarusian Authorities Move to Silence Leading Media Outlet](#)

The authorities targeted TUT.BY, one of the country's largest news outlets, in what happens to be another step in their relentless campaign to stifle independent media. The police searched TUT.BY's offices in Minsk and other cities, and detained at least 13 TUT.BY staff.

India – [COVID causes orphan crisis in India; experts fear neglect, abuse](#)

Thousands of children across the country lost one or both parents in the new pandemic wave, where there were already millions of orphans. The prospect of a surge of abandoned minors worries many, as well as the risk of emotional tragedies, neglect, abuse and exploitation.

United States of America – [The US Should Respect the ICC's Founding Mandate](#)

After more than two years combatting the Trump administration's attacks on the International Criminal Court, the American Society of International Law Task Force published a new critical report and contemplated a possible return to a constructive U.S. policy toward the Court.

Worldwide – [Global Health Summit: Leaders must waive intellectual property rights](#)

Amnesty International warned that G20 leaders meeting tomorrow at the Global Health Summit must face up to the harsh reality and, without waiving intellectual property rights now, the COVID 19 pandemic may not be brought under control for years.

Zimbabwe – [Pregnant girls face barriers accessing public health facilities and risk life changing injuries](#)

Amnesty International published a new report in which they denounce that pregnant girls are at risk of life changing childbirth-related injuries, including obstetric fistula, since many avoid public healthcare facilities in favor of home-based deliveries as an effect of inadequate health infrastructure, cultural practices and high hospital costs.

Thursday
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Burundi – [Once again, human rights defender Germain Rukuki's right to a fair trial is violated](#)

Several human rights organizations expressed their dismay that the Appeals Court of Ntahangwa has not yet announced a verdict in the case of human rights defender Mr. Germain Rukuki. His process was characterized by many irregularities.

European Union / China – [European Parliament Freezes Trade Deal with China](#)

Only a few months after the conclusion of a controversial trade deal, the European Parliament adopted a resolution to freeze its ratification. Concerns had been raised about forced labor in China and its lack of human rights protections and redress mechanisms. The deal is frozen as long as China's baseless counter-sanctions against EU institutions remain in place.

India – [Abandoned Corpses in Rural India Indicate Surge in Covid-19 Deaths](#)

Hundreds of corpses, probably victims of COVID 19, are being abandoned along riverbanks in the northern regions of the country. Amidst this new surge in COVID 19 deaths, HRW called on Indian authorities to focus on solutions, not misguided, abusive policies.

Indonesia – [Suspend, Revise New Internet Regulation](#)

HRW denounced the new rule which requires all private digital services and platforms to register with the Ministry of Communication and to provide access to their data. Those that fail to register will be blocked in the country. The government should suspend and revise the regulation to meet international human rights standards.

Madagascar – [Urgent humanitarian intervention needed as millions face hunger and famine](#)

Amnesty International expressed its concerns for the situation in the southern region of the country, with more than a million people facing hunger due to the devastating famine currently ravaging the area.

Uganda – [Drop Charges Against Law Student](#)

HRW called on the national authorities to drop the abusive charges against Mr. Michael Muhima, the 24-year-old law student who was jailed and denied access to his family and lawyers for 5 days for a tweet parodying police spokesperson.

United States of America – [Failed Justice 100 Years After Tulsa Race Massacre](#)

HRW published a briefing paper to denounce that, instead of providing comprehensive reparations for the May 31, 1921, Tulsa race massacre, the city and state of Oklahoma authorities are carrying out centennial commemorations in ways that continue to harm Tulsa's Black community.

United States of America / Colombia – [The US must stop providing weapons used to repress protests](#)

Amnesty International called on US Secretary of State Blinken to immediately cease the direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer of equipment used for repression against protesters in Colombia, such as small arms, shotguns, and related ammunition.

Friday
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Madagascar – [More than one million people affected by famine, urgent action needed](#)

With more than a million people currently facing starvation in southern Madagascar, donors, foreign states and regional leaders must step up humanitarian aid to avert a human rights crisis, said Amnesty International.

**Saturday and
Sunday**
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United States – [Waiting for justice, 100 years after the Tulsa racial massacre](#)

The state of Oklahoma and the city of Tulsa have yet to provide reparations to survivors and descendants of victims for the May 31, 1921 racial massacre, Human Rights Watch said.

Pakistan – [Blast kills several at pro-Palestine rally in southwest Pakistan](#)

At least 17 people were wounded after explosives planted in a motorbike went off at a pro-Palestinian rally in the southwestern Pakistani border town of Chaman.

Ethiopia – [Ethiopia convicts soldiers of crimes against civilians in Tigray](#)

Ethiopia's military prosecutors have convicted three soldiers of rape, charged 28 others with killing civilians and further 25 with rape and sexual assault in the ongoing conflict in the northern Tigray region.

Myanmar – [Aung San Suu Kyi will appear in court within days, military says](#)

The deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi is healthy at home and will appear in court soon, Myanmar's military leader General Min Aung Hlaing said.

Belarus – [Outcry as Belarus diverts flight, arrests opposition figure](#)

Exiled opposition activist Roman Protasevich has been detained after a passenger plane on which he was travelling was "forcibly" diverted to the capital, Minsk, following an alleged bomb threat.

Worldwide – [COVID-19 death tolls likely a 'significant undercount': WHO](#)

According to the World Health Organization, between six and eight million people might have died from direct and indirect effects of the pandemic so far, meaning that the death toll might be at least two to three times higher than officially reported.

United States – [US to extend temporary deportation protection to Haitians](#)

The United States will expand temporary protection against deportation to Haitian citizens already in the country, a status that grants them a work permit.

United States – [Minneapolis rallies before anniversary of George Floyd killing](#)

People have rallied in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in advance of the one-year anniversary of the killing of George Floyd, one month after Derek Chauvin was convicted for murder.