

Network of Concerned Historians	NCH
<i>Annual Report 2025</i>	https://www.concernedhistorians.org

INTRODUCTION

This **thirty-first *Annual Report*** of the **Network of Concerned Historians (NCH)** contains news about the domain where history and human rights intersect, in particular about the censorship of history and the persecution of historians, archivists, and archaeologists around the globe, as reported by various human rights organizations and other sources. It mainly covers events and developments of 2024 and 2025.

Disclaimer. The fact that the NCH presents this news does *not* imply that it shares the views and beliefs of the historians and others mentioned in it.

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									2025
2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995

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AFGHANISTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2016, 2018, 2021–2024.

Throughout 2024, the restrictions of the Taliban government on the Ashura commemoration (a Shia day of mourning to commemorate the death of Husayn Ibn Ali in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE) continued [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. In addition, the Taliban called *Nowruz* (the first day of the new year in the solar calendar) “un-Islamic.”¹

In July 2024, the Taliban’s Acting Minister of Higher Education Neda Mohammad Nadeem announced a new university curriculum that would remove all non-religious subjects – including mathematics, science, and social studies – and focus exclusively on Islamic scholars and Islamic history in all remaining subjects. The announcement followed an earlier revision of high school education that discarded subjects such as civics and culture education. It further continued the ban on female students, including students of history, archaeology and archival studies, to take part in university entrance examinations [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*].²

In September 2024, the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights issued a report highlighting the importance of addressing decades of conflict and impunity for widespread human rights violations. The report specifically referred to states involved in past military interventions, including the Soviet Union (1979–1989) and the United States (US) (2001–2021), calling for accountability for violations by their nationals. In October 2024, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution underscoring the need to strengthen international efforts to advance accountability for past and ongoing violations, including through the collection and preservation of evidence, but it did not create a mechanism to support these efforts.

Already in 2003, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions had proposed the establishment of an international commission of inquiry into abuses since the invasion of the Soviet Union and the ensuing Soviet-Afghan War (1979–1989), a proposal supported at the time by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC; formed in June 2002) [See NCH *Annual Report 2004*]. In December 2005, the government of then President Hamid Karzai (in office between 2004–2014) had passed a Transitional Justice Action Plan, but initial progress was halted by the 2007 proposal of an Amnesty Bill and the 2010 passing of a National Stability and Reconciliation bill [See NCH *Annual Reports 2006–2011*]. In December 2011, forty researchers of the AIHRC published *Conflict*

¹ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 73.

² Manija Mirzaie, [“University Curriculum Revamp Raises Indoctrination Fears,”](#) *University World News* (20 August 2024).

Mapping in Afghanistan Since 1978, a 800–page report on human rights violations from 1978 to 2001, which located more than 180 mass graves and named more than 500 Afghans responsible for the violations. However, the report was not released and the researchers accused senior officials of suppressing it [See NCH *Annual Reports 2013–2015*].

In 2017, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) requested a preliminary investigation be opened into alleged crimes committed during the US–Afghan War (2001–2021) [See NCH *Annual Report 2018*]. Progress in the investigation remained slow as of 2024 and due to its limited scope and jurisdiction excluded members of US and other international forces involved in the conflict, as well as members of the former government. Alongside the limited progress of the ICC and within Afghanistan, investigations into crimes committed since 2001 had begun in other countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States [See *Annual Reports 2022–2024* under Australia, *Annual Report 2022* under United States, *Annual Report 2023* under United Kingdom]. On 11 May 2025, *BBC News* published more than thirty anonymous eyewitness accounts of alleged war crimes, including extrajudicial killings, committed by United Kingdom Special Forces during the US–Afghan War and the Iraq War (2003–2011).

On 8 July 2025, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Haibatullah Akhundzada, Supreme Leader of the Taliban, and Abdul Hakim Haqqani, Chief Justice of the Taliban.³

ALBANIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 2012, 2015–2024.

ALGERIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 2001–2019, 2021–2024.

In 2024, novelist and journalist Kamel Daoud (1970–) went into exile in Paris after his award-winning novels *The Meursault Investigation* (2013) and *Houris* (2024), about the mass atrocities of Islamist fundamentalists during the internal conflict (1992–2002), provoked death threats from Salafists

³ Volker Türk, “[Afghanistan Can Advance Rights – or Spiral Deeper into Failure, Türk Says](#)” (Statement; Geneva: OHCHR, 9 September 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 13–14; Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 71; Hannah O’Grady, Joel Gunter & Rory Tinman, “[Ex-UK Special Forces Break Silence on ‘War Crimes’ by Colleagues](#),” *BBC News* (11 May 2025); ICC, “[Situation in Afghanistan: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber II Issues Arrest Warrants for Haibatullah Akhundzada and Abdul Hakim Haqqani](#)” (Press release; The Hague: ICC, 8 July 2025).

(members of a fundamentalist movement within Sunni Islam). Following the 2006 presidential “Decree Implementing the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation,” which prohibited to exploit “the wounds of the National Tragedy” [See *NCH Annual Reports 2006–2009, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2019, 2024*], *Houris* was banned in Algeria. Daoud’s French publisher Gallimard was not allowed to be present at the Algiers book fair.⁴

In February and March 2024, the authorities prevented the association SOS Disparus, which represented the families of thousands of people who disappeared during the civil war (1992–2002), from putting on two human rights events in Algiers.⁵

On 29 April 2024, a new law on the film industry came into force, further increasing authorities’ control over film productions and introducing a prison sentence of up to three years for financing or working in film productions contrary to vaguely worded criteria including “national values and principles,” “national sovereignty,” “national unity,” or “the supreme interests of the nation.”⁶

On 30 June 2024, police forces arrested writer Dominique Martre, her husband, her publisher Arezki Ait-Larbi (director of the Koukou publishing house), and the owner of the Librairie Gouraya bookshop in Béjaïa. They were released a few hours later. Martre was presenting her book *La Kabylie en partage: Dans l’intimité des femmes* (2022; Shared Kabylia: In the Intimacy of Women), a memoir about her time living among the women of Kabylia in the 1970s. No explanation was given for the arrest.⁷

On 20 August 2024, security forces prevented many people who had come to the village of to commemorate a historical event of the war of independence (1954–1962) from accessing the site. They reportedly arrested several people, including activists from the Rally for Culture and Democracy political party.⁸

On 16 November 2024, French-Algerian novelist Boualem Sansal (1949–), a critic of both Islamism and the government, was arrested at Algiers airport and detained incommunicado on the charge of “attacking national integrity and unity and state institutions.” The arrest was reportedly linked to his statements, made to the far-right French publication *Frontières*, that the disputed territory of Western Sahara was historically part of Morocco and that France had unfairly ceded Moroccan territory to

⁴ Margot Dijkgraaf, “[Deze politieke roman vol literair dynamiet won de belangrijkste Franse boekenprijs](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (7 November 2024).

⁵ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 23.

⁶ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 24–25.

⁷ “[Algerian Police Raid Book Event, Arrests French Author and Others in Attendance](#),” *The Arab Weekly* (1 July 2024).

⁸ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 23.

Algeria during the colonial era. Sansal's writings tackled the historical horrors of Algeria, including the independence war against France (1954–1962) and the civil war against Islamist insurgents (1992–2002). He was dismissed as a government official in 2003 for criticizing then President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Since 2006, when he wrote his essay *Poste Restante Algeria: An Open Letter to My Compatriots in Anger*, his books had been banned in Algeria. In 2012, a fatwa was issued against Sansal by Hamas accusing him of high treason against Islam, the Arab nation, and its martyrs for traveling to Israel as part of a peace initiative. Many authors joined an appeal for his release written by novelist Kamel Daoud. On 27 March 2025, he was sentenced to five years in prison on charges of undermining national unity, undermining the national economy, and possessing videos and publications that threatened national security. He was also fined 500,000 Algerian dinar (US\$ 3,735). He suffered from cancer. In February 2025, he started a hunger strike. On 1 July 2025, the appeals court confirmed the sentence.⁹

On 23 March 2025, Brahim Boughali, the President of the People's National Assembly (APN; lower house of parliament), announced the formation of a commission tasked with drafting a law that would criminalize French colonialism, calling such criminalization "a national and moral duty toward our martyrs and our history." The proposed legislation sought to address some of the darkest chapters in Algeria's history, including the smoke killings (*enfumades*) of Dahra in 1845, where hundreds of Algerians were burned alive in caves; the use of biological weapons in Laghouat in 1852; the massacres of 8 May 1945 in Sétif and Guelma, which killed more than 45,000; and nuclear tests in the southern desert that left entire communities exposed to radiation. The first attempt to pass the bill followed a French law that celebrated the "positive role" of colonization [See NCH *Annual Report 2006*] but did not succeed. If enacted, the law would represent a formal recognition of the colonial crimes.¹⁰

See also France.

⁹ Kamel Daoud, "[Des Prix Nobel de littérature se mobilisent pour Boualem Sansal](#)," *Le Point* (23 November 2024); Lucy Knight, "[Rushdie, Ernaux and Soyinka Among Authors Calling for Release of Franco-Algerian Novelist Boualem Sansal](#)," *Guardian* (25 November 2024); Martin Bright, "[Boualem Sansal Faces Life Imprisonment If Found Guilty of National Security Charges](#)," *Index on Censorship* (28 November 2024); Hanna Hosman, "[Schrijver Boualem Sansal is al jaren kritisch op thuisland Algerije: Waarom is hij nu gearresteerd?](#)" *NRC Handelsblad* (10 December 2024); "[French-Algerian Author Boualem Sansal Sentenced to Five Years in Prison](#)," *Al Jazeera* (27 March 2025); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 24; Roland van Erven, "[Algerijns-Franse schrijver Sansal in hoger beroep veroordeeld tot 5 jaar cel in Algerije](#)," *NRC Handelsblad* (1 July 2025); Aurelien Breeden, "[Algerian Court Upholds 5-Year Sentence for Writer, Angering France](#)," *New York Times* (1 July 2025); Clemence Manyuke, "[The Plight of Boualem Sansal](#)," *Index on Censorship*, 54 no. 2 (July 2025), 26–28; Salam Boualem, "[A Lesson in Tyranny](#)," *Index on Censorship*, 40 no. 4 (2011); Salam Boualem, "[A Nightmare with a Happy Ending](#)," *Index on Censorship*, 42 no. 1 (2013).

¹⁰ Basma El Atti, "[Algeria Pushes Forward Draft Law to Hold France Accountable for Its Colonial Past](#)," *The New Arab* (25 March 2025).

ANGOLA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2003, 2009, 2017, 2020, 2023–2024.

ARGENTINA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997–2024.

On 24 March 2024, the government published a video claiming that the true number of disappeared persons during the military dictatorship (1976–1983) was far lower than 30,000, reiterating revisionist claims that President Javier Milei had made during his 2023 presidential election campaign [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. The video also focused on the victims of armed organizations during the 1970s, rather than on state terrorism victims, despite state organizations and state-backed paramilitary groups having been the main perpetrators of violence. State officials argued that teaching school students about what happened during the dictatorship constituted “indoctrination.”¹¹

On 27 March 2024, Defense Minister Luis Petri dismissed ten out of thirteen collaborators of the ministry’s Survey and Analysis Teams of the army archives (ERyA; Equipos de Relevamiento y Análisis). Those dismissed included historian and archivist Hernán López who had worked for EryA from 2015. Established in 2010, the ERyA had combed the archives for forensic evidence of crimes against humanity committed under the military dictatorship (1976–1983). Petri declared that the military had been demonized for their operations during the dictatorship and that ERyA’s tasks would be taken over by officials of his ministry. The measure, widely criticized at home and abroad, was seen as an attempt by the new government of President Javier Milei to halt the process of transitional justice in the country [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. In early July 2024, ERyA head Vanina Agostini was dismissed. Days later, a Defense Ministry resolution revoked the law that created EryA. The archives were to be handled by the Defense Archives System, some departments of the Armed Forces, and the National Archive of Remembrance. Only one of the original team members remained at the Defense Ministry (see also below).¹²

¹¹ Tom Philips & Uki Goñi, “[Argentina’s Far-Right Frontrunner Reopens Wounds of Dictatorship](#),” *Guardian* (19 October 2023); Amy Booth, “[Argentina’s Milei Ushers in Atrocity Denialism, Trolling and Attacks on the Media](#),” *Index on Censorship* (22 November 2023); Martina Jauregui, “[Just 6 Months in, Milei Is Dismantling Argentina’s Memory Policy](#),” *Buenos Aires Herald* (10 June 2024); Center for Legal and Social Studies & Memoria abierta, [Canceled Memory: The Libertarian Attempt to Re-Legitimize the Dictatorship](#) (Buenos Aires: CELS, July 2024).

¹² Luciana Bertoia, “[Denuncia internacional contra Luis Petri por obstaculizar las investigaciones sobre los crímenes de la dictadura](#),” *Página 12* (7 April 2024); International Council on Archives Section on Archives

On 14 June 2024, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a landmark ruling holding the State responsible for “not having adopted reasonable measures to prevent” the 1994 bombing of the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA; Argentine Israelite Mutual Association) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2011, 2014, 2016–2021*]. The ruling followed an April 2024 decision by the Cámara Federal de Casación Penal (Federal Criminal Cassation Chamber), which had found the Shia militant organization Hezbollah responsible for carrying out the bombing [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].¹³

On 2 May and on 4 October 2024, three United Nations Special Rapporteurs wrote allegations letters to the government, criticizing the dismissals in the archives teams of the Ministry of Defense; the repeal of a 2004 decree, which created the special unit to investigate the disappearance of children as a result of state terror within the Comisión Nacional por el Derecho a la Identidad (CONADI; National Commission for the Right to Identity) (see below); severe budget cuts in human rights initiatives, including the Dirección Nacional de Sitios y Espacios de Memoria (National directorate of sites and spaces of memory) and the Archivo Nacional de la Memoria (ANM; National Archive of Remembrance); and the glorification of persons convicted of crimes against humanity and the denial of atrocities committed during the military dictatorship (1976–1983) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. On 9 January 2025, the International Council on Archives issued a note of concern and called on the government to “ensure the preservation and public accessibility of the documentary fonds [sic] and collections held by the National Archive of Remembrance” and to “maintain public archival policies aimed at strengthening the role of public archives as essential tools for knowledge of the truth and the defense of citizens’ rights.”¹⁴

On 14 August 2024, President Javier Milei issued a decree dissolving the Unidad especial de investigación de la desaparición de niños como consecuencias del accionar del terrorismo de Estado (special unit to investigate the disappearance of children as a result of state terror), the investigative unit for the search of children forcibly disappeared during the military dictatorship (1976–1983). The decree

and Human Rights, “Note of Concern about the Measures Taken by the Argentine Government Concerning the Archives of the Ministry of Defense” (12 April 2024); “[Javier Milei dismantles a key area that provides evidence in judgments for the crimes of the Argentine dictatorship](#),” *El País* (15 April 2024); Luciana Bertoia, “[Otra denuncia internacional contra Luis Petri por obstaculizar las investigaciones por crímenes de la dictadura](#),” *Página 12* (17 April 2024); Martina Jauregui & Valen Iricibar, “[This Archive Team Brought Dozens of Dictatorship Criminals to Trial: Now It’s Gone](#),” *Buenos Aires Herald* (1 September 2024).

¹³ Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, [Caso Asociación Civil Memoria Activa Vs. Argentina](#) (14 June 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 36, 81.

¹⁴ United Nations Special Rapporteurs, [AL ARG 6/2024](#) (2 May 2024) and [government reply](#) (2 July 2024); United Nations Special Rapporteurs, [AL ARG 9/2024](#) (4 October 2024) and [government reply](#) (4 December 2024); International Council on Archives, “[Note from the International Council on Archives about Its Concern with Regard to the Measures Adopted by the Argentinian Government Affecting the Human Rights Secretariat and Its Institutions](#)” (press release; 9 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 36.

argued that the unit's access to information violated the constitution and the "right to intimacy" of members of the security forces. The original 2004 decree that created the Comisión Nacional por el Derecho a la Identidad (CONADI; National Commission for the Right to Identity), the umbrella organization of which the special investigation unit was a part, had stipulated that police files could only be requested when witnesses or persons seeking to find their true identity mentioned a particular member of the armed or security forces and that information remained confidential unless there was overwhelming evidence that a person under investigation committed a crime leading to a trial. The Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of May Square) instead criticized the decree as a "new attack" against research into the military dictatorship that "favors impunity" by the Milei administration.¹⁵

On 7 November 2024, Vice President Victoria Villarruel shared excerpts from Dolores Reyes's *Cometierra* (Earth eater) – a novel about a young girl getting visions of her father attacking her mother after eating soil, addressing femicide and gender-based violence – on X, describing the book as immoral and degrading and calling for its removal from schools and libraries. Villarruel's tweet was condemned by PEN International as part of a broader movement of book bans. In addition to being a novelist, Reyes also worked as a writer for the *Untold Microcosms* project at the British Museum, set up in 2022 to provide more historical and cultural context to the Museum's Central and South American collections.¹⁶

In December 2024, the government terminated the contracts of four hundred staff members of the Human Rights Secretariat, jeopardizing the operation of several dictatorship memorial sites (repurposed former clandestine detention centers that operated during the 1976–1983 military dictatorship) such as Automotores Orletti, Virrey Ceballos, El Olimpo, and Club Atlético (Buenos Aires City), Faro de la Memoria (Mar del Plata), and El Vesubio (Buenos Aires province). In a hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on 14 November 2024, Human Rights Secretary Alberto Baños called the largely dismissed civilian team working on the Armed Forces' archives (the Equipos de Relevamiento y Análisis [EryA]; Survey and Analysis Teams) a "group of vigilantes [See also above and NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. He also said that the spirit of the government was to guarantee "complete memory" – a phrase also used by denialist groups that supported the old so-called "two-demon theory," a rhetorical device that equated the violence of the Armed Forces and left-wing armed

¹⁵ Martina Jaureguay, "[Milei Dissolves Investigation Unit That Helped Find Dictatorship-Era Appropriated Children](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (14 August 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 36.

¹⁶ "[Argentina: PEN International Condemns Attempted Censorship of the Book Cometierra](#)," *PEN International* (22 November 2024); Jacob Sugarman, "[The United States' Culture Wars Come to Argentina](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (2 January 2025); PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 29; "[Untold Microcosms: Latin American Writers in the British Museum](#)," *Santo Domingo Centre of Excellence for Latin American Research* (21 January 2022).

groups. On [15] January 2025, federal judge Ariel Lijo ordered Baños to ensure that the Automotores Orletti, Virrey Ceballos, El Olimpo, and Club Atlético had sufficient and competent staff to maintain their research and educational tasks and preserve their archives, after Buenos Aires City lawmaker Victoria Montenegro had filed a complaint over the government's termination of contracts.¹⁷

On 9 January 2025, an internal memo of Captain Jorge Javier Raimondo of the General Secretariat of the Navy ordered that from 10 February 2025 on, parts of the General Archive would be relocated and the remainder (an estimated eight kilometers of documents) would be either transferred to a storage unit or "stay in their current location to be shredded and, if necessary, digitized for historical reasons." The memo was leaked and on 28 January and the Public Sector Archivists Association published the memo on Instagram. Following the leak, Human Rights Attorney Pablo Llonto and Federal Prosecutor Miguel Ángel Blanco García Ordás filed a suit demanding a reversal of the Navy's decision and calling on Minister of Defense Luis Petri to explain the Navy's decision. On 31 January, Judge Alicia Vence ordered the Navy to preserve documents that could serve as evidence of crimes committed during the military dictatorship (1976–1983). The Navy had a history of obstructing access to and destroying records pertaining to the military dictatorship.¹⁸

On 22 May 2025, President Javier Milei issued a decree to restructure the Banco Nacional de Datos Genéticos (BNDG; National Bank for Genetic Data), a genetic database created in 1987 to trace the family lineage of around 500 babies from people who had been abducted by the government during the military dictatorship (1976–1983) and given up for adoption in a process known as apropiación (appropriation). The decree was presented as a way to make the BNDG more efficient, but widely criticized as part of the Milei government's historical revisionism toward the military dictatorship [See also above and NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. After coming to power in December 2023, Milei stopped adjusting the BNDG's budget for inflation, causing the erosion of its spending capacity. And the administration was yet to open a selection procedure after the ten-year term of BNDG director Mariana Herrera Piñero expired early in 2025. In June 2025, a court ruled that any changes to the BNDG would have to pass judicial review first, after the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of May Square) filed a case against the decree.¹⁹

¹⁷ Facundo Iglesia, "[Massive Layoffs Endanger Dictatorship Memorial Sites, Workers Say](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (27 December 2024); "[Judge Orders Operation of Dictatorship Memory Sites Be Guaranteed](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (15 January 2025).

¹⁸ Luciana Bertoia, "[La Armada da luz verde para destruir documentación](#)," *Página/12* (29 January 2025); Martina Jaureguy, "[Argentine Navy Ordered to Preserve Dictatorship Archive](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (2 February 2025); Elizabeth Bratton, "[Judge Forbids Argentina's Navy from Destroying Documents](#)," *Argentina Reports* (4 February 2025).

¹⁹ "[Argentina's Milei Restructures National Bank of Genetic Data](#)," *Buenos Aires Herald* (24 May 2025); Haley Cohen Gilliland, "[The Human Cost of Javier Milei's Assault on Science and History](#)," *New York Times* (4 July 2025).

See also United States, Venezuela.

ARMENIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2005–2006, 2010, 2014–2016.

See Azerbaijan, Russia, Türkiye, Vatican.

AUSTRALIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 2001, 2003, 2007–2009, 2014–2016, 2018–2024.

In May 2024, a statue of Tasmanian Premier William Crowther (1817–1885), erected in the capital Hobart in 1889, was chopped down at the ankles. As a surgeon he had ordered the exhumation of the body of William Lanne (c. 1836–1869), believed to be the last “full-blooded” Aboriginal Tasmanian male. After the exhumation, Crowther had sent Lanne’s skull to the Royal College of Surgeons in London for preservation in order to prove since-discredited theories about Tasmanian Aboriginal people – that they were the missing link between humans and Neanderthals.

In 1982, the Australian Archaeological Association had stated that in the case of the so-called Crowther Collection ethical considerations outweighed scientific value and urged the Tasmanian government to take it over. The collection was eventually returned to the Aboriginal community and underwent traditional cremation in May 1985. In June 1986 the Tasmanian Aboriginal Center imposed a moratorium on the excavation of Aboriginal sites in Tasmania.²⁰

On 3 August 2024, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese backtracked from his government’s promise to establish a “truth-telling” commission, despite prior budget allocations for its creation, as part of the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart [See NCH *Annual Reports 2018, 2020*]. The statement consisted of three key ambitions: an Indigenous voice in Parliament enshrined in the constitution (a request which was voted down in a referendum in 2023); one or multiple treaties between the Indigenous and settler populations; and a so-called Makarrata commission to oversee “a process of agreement-making between

²⁰ Tiffanie Turnbull, “[A Stolen Skull, a Severed Statue and an Australian City Divided](#),” *BBC News* (15 September 2024); Christopher Chippindale, “Skeletons Rattle Down Under,” *New Scientist* (14 March 1985), 10; Paul G. Bahn, “Skeletons in the Cupboard,” *New Scientist* (13 November 1986), 58; Colin Renfrew & Paul Bahn, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice* (London 1991), 465–466; Paul G. Bahn, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Archaeology* (Cambridge 1996), 360–361.

governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.” The decision was criticized by representatives of several Indigenous populations.²¹

The Education Standards Authority of New South Wales reportedly planned to remove the teaching of the Aboriginal past prior to European arrival from the year 7–10 syllabus as of 2027. In 2012, the topic “Ancient Australia” had been introduced in year 7 as part of the Australian Curriculum. In 2022, a new topic, called the “deep time history of Australia,” was presented to provide a more detailed study of 65,000 years of First Nations’ settlement on the continent. In a reversal of this development, and in contradiction to the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration of 2020, students would from 2027 only learn First Nations’ history following European colonization in 1788, that is, the episode that reflects the destruction of traditional Aboriginal society, thus neglecting most of their prior history.²²

In early November 2024, newly elected Australian Conservative Party leader of Queensland David Crisafuli announced the liquidation of the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry (TTHI) – a truth-telling commission set up by the then governing Australian Labor Party to investigate the impact of colonialism on the Indigenous populations of Queensland (akin to the Yoorrook Justice Commission in Victoria [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*]). After its erection in July 2024, the TTHI had organized over sixty community engagement sessions to raise awareness and prepare for official hearings. At its first hearing, the Commissioner of the Queensland Police acknowledged crimes committed by the Native Police – a paramilitary organization estimated to have killed tens of thousands of Indigenous people in the nineteenth century.²³

In January 2025, a Freedom of Information Act request revealed that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) had censored historian Craig Stockings [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*] by removing an entire chapter of volume one of an official history of the government’s operations in East Timor, commissioned to the Australian War Memorial history unit in 2015. The partially redacted chapter, obtained through the request, confirmed the cover-up by the John Howard government (1996–2007) of the Indonesian military’s arming of militias which had committed atrocities in East Timor between 1975 and the island’s independence in 1999; the active support of Australia for Indonesia because of its large industrial and commercial interests in the region; and the refusal of then Australian Foreign

²¹ Karen Middleton, “[Albanese Endorses ‘Principle’ of Makarrata but Stops Short of Backing Truth and Justice Commission](#),” *Guardian* (4 August 2024); Lorena Allam, “[What Is Makarrata and Has Albanese Broken an Election Promise?](#)” *Guardian* (5 August 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 41.

²² Michael Westaway, Bruce Pascoe & Louise Zarmati, “[NSW Will Remove 65,000 Years of Aboriginal History from Its Years 7–10 Syllabus – It’s a Step Backwards for Education](#),” *The Conversation* (4 October 2024).

²³ Maxim Shanahan, “[The Retreating Tide of Transitional Justice in Australia](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (24 January 2025).

Minister Alexander Downer to acknowledge the situation. Similar censorship attempts were reported for the forthcoming volume two.²⁴

On 24 January 2025, ahead of Australia Day on 26 January (the anniversary of Britain's First Fleet landing at Sydney Cove in 1788), a statue of James Cook (1728–1779), first unveiled in 1874, was damaged and covered with paint in Sydney. Cook statues had previously been damaged in 2018, 2022, and 2024. Indigenous Australians viewed Australia Day as a reminder of the dispossession and displacement of their people [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016–2018, 2020, 2024*].

On 25 January 2025, a monument to John Batman (1801–1839), who played a leading role in massacring Aboriginal Tasmanians during the “Black War” (mid-1820s–1832) and in founding the city of Melbourne on Aboriginal lands, was toppled and destroyed in Melbourne. Protesters in Melbourne also spray-painted “land back” on a monument for Australian soldiers who died during World War I.

On 26 January 2025, someone sprayed “the colony is falling” on a statue of British King George V (1865–1936) in Canberra. In June 2024, a monument of King George V had been beheaded in Melbourne.²⁵

See also Afghanistan.

AUSTRIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2001, 2005–2007, 2009, 2018, 2020.

See Chile.

AZERBAIJAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1997–1998, 2008–2013, 2015–2024.

Since 2021, Azerbaijani forces had destroyed nearly eighty ethnic Armenian historical, religious, political, and residential sites, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED). Since Azerbaijan's military offensive in September 2023, the pace of destruction had accelerated [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2022, 2024*]. From late 2023 onward, Azerbaijani forces began to remove

²⁴ Rex Patrick, “[Downer and Howard's East Timor Lies: History Missing in Action](#),” *Michael West Media* (14 January 2025).

²⁵ Hannah Ritchie, “[Captain Cook Statue Vandalised ahead of Australia Day](#),” *BBC News* (24 January 2025); Mike Ives, “[Monuments in Australia Are Vandalized to Protest National Day](#),” *New York Times* (26 January 2024).

statues and monuments of prominent ethnic Armenians, particularly in Stepanakert/Khankendi, the capital of Nagorno-Karabach until then.²⁶

On 22 June 2024, Igbal (Iqbal) Abilov (1989–), a historian and ethnographer of ethnic minorities, especially the Talysh people (an ethnic Iranian minority in Azerbaijan), and lecturer in international relations at Belarusian State University, Minsk, Belarus, was arrested by the State Security Service in Masalli during a family visit to southern Azerbaijan. On 24 July 2024, he was remanded to four months in pre-trial detention in the capital Baku on charges of high treason, foreign-agent-instructed public appeals against the state, and incitement of ethnic hatred. The charges were based on Abilov's communications with Garnik Asatryan, an Armenian professor specializing in Iranistics and Kurdology. Abilov's lawyer stated that communications with Asatryan had been purely academic. On 19 November 2024, the court extended Abilov's pre-trial detention by four months, until 22 March 2025. On 26 February 2025, the Lankaran Serious Crimes Court began virtual hearings. On 2 May 2025, at the end of the final hearing, the prosecutor requested a 19-year prison sentence. The charges were reportedly fabricated in retaliation for his research on the history and culture of ethnic minorities, including the Talysh, in the South Caucasus, Türkiye, and Iran, and his collaboration with Armenian scholars while attending meetings and conferences held under the auspices of European research institutions. An ethnic Talysh, Abilov had co-founded the Talysh National Academy in Belarus and he was the editor of *The Herald of the National Academy of Talysh*, an international journal dedicated to the scholarly study of the Talysh. One of his publications was *Essays on the History and Ethnography of the Talysh* (2011). Abilov's arrest was part of a crackdown on dissidents who had criticized the September 2023 Azerbaijani offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh during the lead-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in November 2024 in Baku.²⁷

See also Vatican.

²⁶ Nichita Gurcov & Stella Tangiyan, "[Destruction of Armenian Heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh](#)," *ACLEd* (20 September 2024).

²⁷ Network of Concerned Historians, [Azerbaijan: Igbal Abilov \(Talysh historian and ethnographer\)](#) (4 November 2024); Network of Concerned Historians, [Follow-up](#) (17 June 2025); "[Appeal for Igbal Abilov](#)," *International Talysh Foundation* (no date [July] 2024); Academic Freedom Monitoring Project, "[Igbal Abilov](#)," *Scholars at Risk* (22 July 2024); "[Azerbaijan: Academics Arrested on Fabricated Charges: Igbal Abilov and Bahruz Samadov](#)," *Amnesty International* (23 September 2024); "[Azerbaijan: Academics Face Up to 20 Years in Prison for Speaking Out](#)," *Amnesty International* (23 September 2024); "[The Persecution of Igbal Abilov Undermines Academic Freedom–SAR](#)," *Turan* (6 October 2024); European Parliament, "[Resolution on the Situation in Azerbaijan, Violation of Human Rights and International Law and Relations with Armenia](#)" (2024/2890(RSP)) (24 October 2024); Anton Troianovski, "[Repression Intensifies in the Country Hosting a Major Climate Meeting](#)," *New York Times* (1 November 2024); "[AHA Sends Letter to the President of Azerbaijan Expressing Concern for Jailed Historian](#)" (press release; Washington: AHA, 20 November 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 87–88; Scholars at Risk, "[Release Wrongfully Imprisoned Academic Igbal Abilov](#)" (New York: SAR, 16 May 2025); European Parliament Citizens' Enquiries Unit (AskEP), personal communication (18 June 2025).

BAHRAIN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2004, 2008–2012, 2015–2017, 2021–2022, 2024.

The criminal investigation of historian Jassim Hussein Al-Abbas, begun in November 2023 [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2020, 2024], continued throughout 2024. He was held under an arbitrary travel ban on the accusation of “circulating wrong historical information.” Despite his repeated inquiries, authorities refused to disclose how he could contest it.²⁸

BANGLADESH

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2001, 2004–2006, 2008–2019, 2021–2024.

On 5 August 2024, anti-government protesters [See NCH *Annual Report* 2024] defied a curfew and breached Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s palace, forcing her to resign and flee the country. A statue of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1920–1975), Bangladesh’s founding father and father of Sheikh Hasina, was vandalized in the capital Dhaka. Crowds also attacked minority religious sites, including Hindu and Ahmadiyya places of worship. In New York, a crowd stormed the Bangladesh consulate and took down Mujibur Rahman’s portrait.²⁹

On 27 August 2024, the interim government of Mohammad Yunus established a commission of inquiry to investigate enforced disappearances of activists, political opponents, and others during the reign of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (in office between 2009–2024), who had been ousted by popular protest three weeks prior.³⁰

In October 2024, the interim government canceled eight national days, including 7 March (commemorating the 1971 speech by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman [1920–1975] that informally declared national independence) and 15 August (commemorating the latter’s assassination in 1975). In November 2024, six government-run medical colleges named after Sheikh Hasina, Mujibur Rahman, and other Awami League leaders were renamed. In January 2025, the government further announced

²⁸ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 89.

²⁹ “Statue of Sheikh Hasina’s Father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Vandalised by Protesters,” *Times of India* (5 August 2024); Sharangee Dutta, “Protesters Storm Bangladesh Consulate in US, Take Down Mujibur Rahman’s Portrait,” *India Today* (6 August 2024); Mujib Mashal, “As Bangladesh Reinvents Itself, Islamist Hard-Liners See an Opening,” *New York Times* (1 April 2025).

³⁰ “5-Member Commission Formed to Detect Victims of Forced Disappearance,” *Prothomalo* (27 August 2024); “Bangladesh: Government Sets up Disappearances Inquiry,” *Human Rights Watch* (29 August 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 45, 90.

that it would change the names of thirteen public universities named after Mujibur Rahman, his wife Fazilatunnessa Mujib (1930–1975), and Sheikh Hasina.³¹

On 23 October 2024, the interim government banned the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student organization backed by the Awami League party of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. BCL members were accused of carrying out attacks and killings during the student-led uprising of July–August 2024, and of instigating campus-based violence over the last fifteen years. An (anonymous) master's student in the history department at Dhaka University who was a BCL member denied involvement in any attacks and declared that he had been compelled to join BCL to secure student accommodation over which BCL groups on campus wielded control. He feared exclusion from the university and arrest.³²

In January 2025, the interim government announced new textbooks for primary and secondary education, including to remove “exaggerated” accounts of historical events. The new textbooks deleted some mentions of Mujibur Rahman (1920–1975), including references to him as “The Father of the Nation,” and Sheikh Hasina (1947–), including photographs. It further attributed the declaration of independence to Ziaur Rahman (1936–1981), founder of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP; the chief opposition to the Awami League founded by Mujibur Rahman) and former President (in office between 1977–1981), instead of Mujibur Rahman – despite the widely held belief that Ziaur Rahman made his declaration on behalf of Mujibur Rahman, who had been arrested by Pakistani security forces.³³

On 2 March 2025, in a meeting with United Nations officials, Chief Adviser of the interim government Muhammad Yunus called for the “meticulous preservation” of records documenting alleged human rights violations committed under the administration of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (in office between 2009–2024) and emphasized the need for an improved archival system to ensure truth and justice.³⁴

See also Myanmar.

³¹ Mohiuddin Alamgir, “[University Name Changes Erase Sheikh Hasina Family Ties](#),” *University World News* (23 January 2025); Mujib Mashal, “[As Bangladesh Reinvents Itself, Islamist Hard-Liners See an Opening](#),” *New York Times* (1 April 2025).

³² Mohiuddin Alamgir, “[Student Group Banned as Criminal Cases against Members Mount](#),” *University World News* (30 October 2024).

³³ Zia Chowdhury, “[Bangladesh Rewrites History, Leaves Millions of Schoolchildren Without Textbooks](#),” *Eurasia Review* (18 January 2025); Mohiuddin Alamgir, “[University Name Changes Erase Sheikh Hasina Family Ties](#),” *University World News* (23 January 2025).

³⁴ “[Preserving Records of ‘Atrocities’ by Hasina Regime Critical: Yunus](#),” *The Hindu* (3 March 2025).

BARBADOS

Previous *Annual Report* entry: 2024.

On [17] June 2024, a fire caused by a lightning strike partly destroyed an archival depository. In response, the Caribbean Branch of the International Council on Archives (CARBICA) expressed great sadness over the “severe blow to our collective cultural heritage” and called on governments and organizations to assist in recovery efforts. The archive contained many colonial-era documents, leading some to call especially on the British government (which colonized Barbados between 1625–1966) to assist in recovery efforts and digitization projects.³⁵

On 7 September 2024, the United Kingdom-based missionary organization United Society Partners in the Gospel (USPG) launched a reconciliation project to compensate descendants of eighteenth-century enslaved Africans who were forced to harvest sugar cane on the Codrington plantations. The USPG, a missionary branch of the Church of England, and the Codrington Trust pledged £ 7 million for the project and appointed an eleven-member steering committee, including historian and chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Reparations Commission Sir Hilary Beckles. The project was criticized for being underfunded, given that the estate generated an estimated £5 million a year adjusted to today’s economy, and for having excluded local organizations before the launch.³⁶

BELARUS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–2000, 2005–2007, 2009–2011, 2014–2024.

Among those dismissed, arrested and detained in the context of the protests against President Aliaksandr Lukashenko’s landslide 9 August 2020 re-election, which the opposition and many governments had denounced as fraudulent, were many historians [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024* for related lists], including:

³⁵ Caribbean Branch of the International Council on Archives, “[Statement from the President of CARBICA on the Barbados Archival Repository Fire](#)” (press release; 1 July 2024); Laura Trevelyan & Nicole Phillip, “[The History of Caribbean Slavery Is Being Lost: Britain Must Act Now to Preserve It](#),” *Guardian* (19 October 2024).

³⁶ Marlon Madden & Stefon Jordan, “[Special Envoy on Reparations Disappointed Reparations Initiative Bypassed His Office](#),” *Barbados Today* (12 September 2023); Desirée Baptiste & Jon Ungood-Thomas, “[Beatings, Brandings, Suicides: Life on Plantations Owned by Church of England Missionary Arm](#),” *Guardian* (25 May 2024); Robert Beckford, “[Will the Anglican Church Come Clean and Pay Its Debt over Slavery? Not from What We Have Seen So Far](#),” *Guardian* (4 June 2024); Natricia Duncan, “[Anglican Group Launches £7m Project in Barbados to Atone for Slavery Atrocities](#),” *Guardian* (6 September 2025).

- In [October] 2023, Zaryna Kanapatskaya ([1979]–), associate professor at the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences specialized in the history of Belarusian Tatars and daughter of the late leader of the Belarusian Tatar community Ibrahim Kanapatski, was arrested. On 10 October 2023, she was shown on state television “confessing” that she had been a subscriber to online “extremist” content and that she had participated in the 2020 protests.³⁷

In 2024, Minister of Education Andrei Ivanets reportedly declared that the new history textbooks for eleventh-grade students presented the August 2020 protests (in a context of high tension in Minsk amid widespread anger over President Alexander Lukashenko’s landslide 9 August 2020 re-election, which the opposition and many governments denounced as fraudulent) as a “coup d’état.”³⁸

Throughout 2024, historian, human rights activist and 2022 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski [Alieś Bialiacki] (1962–) [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*, under Belarus and Russia] was reportedly repeatedly denied access to medication and was in urgent need of medical care.³⁹

On 10 January 2024, Aleh Katsapau [Касапau] was sentenced to two and a half years in a penal colony on charges of “insulting the President,” “incitement to hatred,” and “promoting extremist activities.” He had been involved in the popularization of Belarusian history and culture and had worked for the Samizdat historical and cultural youth organization *Talaka* in the 1990s.⁴⁰

In [early June] 2024, a resident of Kobrin (Kobryn) was sentenced to ten days’ imprisonment for “distributing” *Айчына: маляўнічая гісторыя – Ад Рagneды да Касцюшкі* (“Fatherland: A Colorful History – From Ragneda to Kosciusko”) by historian and chairman of the Belarusian charter of PEN International Uładzimir Arlou. The court argued that by having the book on a shelf in his house, it was being “publicly displayed” as it could at least be seen by “family members.” The book was ordered to be destroyed.⁴¹

On 10 September 2024, the trial of historian Ihar Melnikau [Melnikov] started at the Minsk City Court. Melnikau was charged with “facilitating extremist activities,” reportedly on account of his work on the historical ties between Belarus and Poland and for giving an interview to Euroradio while traveling to

³⁷ “[Belarusian Authorities Detain Noted Historian, Daughter of Late Leader of Country’s Tatar Community](#),” *RFE/RL* (10 October 2023).

³⁸ Belarusian Students’ Association, *The State of Belarusian Academia in 2024* (no place; [March 2025]).

³⁹ PEN International, *Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance* (London: PEN International, 2025), 75.

⁴⁰ “[Aleh Katsapau](#),” *PEN Belarus* (2 February 2024); PEN America, *Freedom to Write Index 2024* (London: PEN, 24 April 2025); “[Aleh Katsapau](#),” *Viasna Human Rights Center* ([no date]).

⁴¹ “[A Resident of Kobrin Was Awarded to an Arrest for a Book by Historian Arlou in a Bookcase](#),” *Racyja* (3 June 2024).

Poland. The state-sanctioned view of history saw Belarusian history as intertwined with Russian history, sanctioning research into and teaching of historical subjects like the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1236–1795) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. On 13 September 2024, Melnikau was sentenced to four years in a penal colony.⁴²

See also Azerbaijan, Japan.

BELGIUM

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002–2004, 2006, 2008, 2010–2012, 2021–2024.

In July 2024, the 2022 law on the restitution of colonial collections – which allowed objects, in particular those taken under duress or through violence, to be repatriated to Belgium’s former colonies of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda or Burundi – was criticized for relying too much on interstate restitution programs instead of grassroots collaboration between museums, diasporas, and local communities.

Recent research at the Africa Museum – founded in 1898 to glorify the colonization of Congo by Leopold II (in office as Belgian king between 1865–1909 and private owner of the Congo Free State between 1885–1908) – had revealed that more than 40,000 of its objects (one third of the collection) had been gathered before World War I (1914–1918), the period considered the most violent of the foreign reign (under Belgian King Leopold II in 1885–1908, under Belgian colonization in 1908–1960). Previous estimates had assumed that around 1,000 objects had been violently taken.⁴³

On 2 December 2024, the Court of Appeal of Brussels found that the State’s “systematic kidnapping” of Métis children (those of mixed African and European ancestry) during its colonial rule in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) until 1960, and Rwanda and Burundi until 1962 constituted a crime against humanity, and awarded the five plaintiffs, who as children between 1948 and 1953 had been removed from their Congolese mother, € 50,000 (£42,000) each. Geneviève Kaninda, a representative of the NGO African Futures Lab, praised the verdict and criticized the Belgian State for

⁴² “[Belarusian Historian Ihar Melnikau Goes on Trial on Extremism Charge](#),” *RFE/RL* (10 September 2024); Scholars at Risk, [Academic Freedom Monitoring Project](#) (13 September 2024); PEN America, [Freedom to Write Index 2024](#) (London: PEN, 24 April 2025).

⁴³ Jennifer Rankin, “[Belgium Museum Wrestles with Colonial Past, with 40,000 Objects Tainted with Violence](#),” *Guardian* (13 July 2024).

making it difficult for inhabitants of the DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi to obtain visas to conduct DNA tests and archival research.⁴⁴

On 19 January 2025, author Pierre Mertens (1939–2025) died. On 8 September 1995, Mertens and his French publisher Seuil had been sued for libel and breach of privacy by the widow of King Leopold III (1901–1983), Princess Lilian Baels (1916–2002), and their son Prince Alexander (1942–2009) in Paris in relation to Mertens's book *Une Paix royale* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), an imaginary autobiography of the author's youth in which the recent history of Belgium, and King Leopold III and the royal family in particular, played a central role. The complainants demanded withdrawal of the 7,000 printed copies of the book from sale, deletion of fourteen passages, and one million French francs of damages. On 14 September 1995, the judge ruled that even if novelists had a right to fiction they had to be careful when portraying and naming existing persons and that the complainants' privacy and reputation were tarnished. The defendants had to pay one French franc of damages but the book was not withdrawn. In a second judgment on 22 September, the judge ruled that two defamatory passages, a portrait of Prince Alexander and one of King Baudouin (1930–1993), had to be deleted from further editions of the book.

In 2007 Mertens was sued for defamation by politician and historian Bart De Wever after accusing the latter of negationism because he had called the apologies of the Antwerp City Council for its involvement in the World War II persecution of Jews “a gratuitous gesture.” The case became time-barred in 2012.⁴⁵

See also Netherlands, Rwanda, United States.

BELIZE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2014.

On 23 January 2025, Central Bank governor Kareem Michael announced new national banknotes replacing the image of the British Queen Elizabeth II (1926–2022) with images of the first post-

⁴⁴ Jennifer Rankin, “[Court Ruling on Belgium's Conduct in Colonial Africa Hailed as Turning Point](#),” *Guardian* (12 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 55, 97.

⁴⁵ Kristien Bonneure, “[Schrijver Pierre Mertens \(85\), voor de rechter gedaagd door prinses Lilian voor zijn roman 'Koninklijke rust,' is overleden](#),” *VRT NWS* (20 January 2025); Benoît Denis, “Que peut (dire) la littérature en Belgique? Autonomie de la littérature et procès d'écrivains, de Camille Lemonnier à Pierre Mertens,” in: Pascal Durand, Pierre Hébert, Jean-Yves Mollier & François Vallotton, eds., *La censure de l'imprimé: Belgique, France, Québec et Suisse romande, XIXe et XXe siècles* (Québec: Éditions Nota Bene, 2006), 38–39, 42–43, 49–50.

independence Prime Minister and “Father of the Nation” George Cadle Price (1919–2011; in office as Prime Minister between 1981–1984 and 1989–1993), and of the founder of Belize’s two major political parties, the People’s United Party and the United Democratic Party, Philip Goldson (1923–2001). The new banknotes were a way “to recognize and celebrate our heritage and the rich history of Belize.”⁴⁶

BENIN

Precious *Annual Report* entries: 2023.

BOLIVIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007, 2009–2023.

BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2024.

In the lead-up to the first International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*], on 11 July 2024, incidents of violence against returnees and internally displaced persons from the Yugoslav Wars of Independence (1991–1995) increased.⁴⁷

In September 2024, a new history curriculum for ninth-grade elementary school pupils took effect in the Republika Srpska (RS) entity. Part of the new curriculum, which had been proposed by the Republic Pedagogical Institute of Republika Srpska and applied to all schools within its territory, was the textbook “History for the Ninth Grade of Elementary School.” The textbook included a section titled “Republika Srpska and the Homeland Defense War” which portrayed the 1992 Bosnian War offensive led by then RS President Radovan Karadžić (in office between 1992–1996) and backed by then President of Serbia Slobodan Milošević (in office between 1989–2000) as a war of self-defense. It further referred to Karadžić and military leader Ratko Mladić, among others, as “heroes” and did not mention their conviction by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia on charges

⁴⁶ Natricia Duncan & Hipolito Novelo, “[Belize Removes Queen Elizabeth’s Image on Banknotes As ‘Step In Decolonization’](#),” *Guardian* (24 January 2025).

⁴⁷ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 101.

of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The textbook also did not mention any crimes committed by RS forces during the Bosnian War (1992–1995), including the July 1995 Srebrenica genocide [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].

On 11 October 2024, the Constitutional Court of Sarajevo ordered the temporary suspension of the history curriculum, citing a risk of discrimination of non-Serb minorities. On 23 January 2025, it ruled that the textbooks were unconstitutional. In its verdict, it stated that educational materials “especially those related to history and society, must be harmonized with legal norms and democratic values, in order to prevent discrimination, revisionism, ideological manipulation or indoctrination of children.” It further stated that the textbook trivialized war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, harmed the post-war process of reconciliation and failed to introduce multiperspectivity.⁴⁸

A 20 September 2024 report by the Srebrenica Memorial Center found that incidents of genocide denial between September 2023 and September 2024 had increased more than threefold compared to the previous year, citing lack of prosecution and the amplification of revisionism about the 1995 Srebrenica genocide by media outlets in Serbia and Republika Srpska (RS) and prominent figures such as Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić and RS President Milorad Dodik. The report found a particular increase in April and May 2024 coinciding with the announcement and passing of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution to establish an annual Srebrenica genocide commemoration [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. Meeting on 11 March 2025 in Sarajevo rather than Potočari due to security threats, the Srebrenica Memorial Center found that, despite the 2021 amendments to the criminal code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) that criminalized denial of atrocity crimes, the BiH Prosecutor’s Office had not processed any of the dozens of criminal complaints.⁴⁹

See also Serbia.

⁴⁸ “[Ratko Mladic and Other War Criminals ‘Officially Become Heroes in the RS Education System’](#),” *NI* (3 September 2024); Selma Boracic Mrso, “[Bosnian Serb Schoolchildren To Be Taught Mladic, Karadzic Were ‘Heroes’](#),” *Balkan Insight* (13 September 2024); Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, “[Extraordinary Plenary Session](#)” (11 October 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 66; Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, “[Decision in Case No.U-20/24](#)” (23 January 2025); Lejla Memcic, “[Bosnian Constitutional Court Bans History Lessons Glorifying War Criminals](#),” *Balkan Insight* (24 January 2025).

⁴⁹ Maja Nikolic, “[Srebrenica Genocide Denials Rise Amid Lack of Prosecutions: Report](#),” *Balkan Insight* (20 September 2024); United Nations General Assembly, *International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica* (Resolution A/RES/78/282) (30 May 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 100, 101; Balkan Diskurs, “[The Srebrenica Memorial Center’s Fight against Genocide Deniers](#),” *Global Voices* (25 April 2025); Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial Center and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide (Srebrenica Memorial Center), *Srebrenica Genocide Denial Report 2023* (Srebrenica July 2023).

BOTSWANA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2018.

BRAZIL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2001–2003, 2005–2024.

Throughout 2024, the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva officially recognized thirteen Indigenous territories and made progress in the recognition of another eleven, but hundreds of claims were still pending. A key obstacle was an attempt by agribusiness interests to deny Indigenous peoples' right to their traditional lands if they had not been physically present on them at the time that the 1988 Constitution was adopted. In 2023, the Supreme Court had ruled that such a cut-off date ("marco temporal") was unconstitutional, but Congress had nevertheless passed it into law. As of late 2024, the issue was pending before the court again [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].⁵⁰

On 2 April 2024, law professor Eneá de Stutz e Almeida, President of the Comissão de Anistia (Amnesty Commission), apologized on behalf of the State for crimes committed against Indigenous people, including torture, incarceration in an "Indigenous concentration camp," and land appropriation, during the military dictatorship (1964–1985), in what constituted the first apology for these crimes. During the ceremony, Almeida further added apologies "for the persecution [Indigenous people]... have suffered over the last 524 years because of the non-Indigenous invasion of this land."⁵¹

In May 2024, prosecutors charged four former officials and a medical examiner for the 1969 killing of Carlos Marighella (1911–1969), a former member of Congress who led an armed opposition to the dictatorship (1964–1985), and its cover-up. Prosecutors also filed civil suits against more than hundred former officials for torture, disappearances, and killings during the dictatorship.⁵²

On 4 July 2024, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva reinstated the Comissão Especial sobre Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos (CEMDP; Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances) – set

⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 74; Vanessa Buschschlüter, "[Brazil's Top Court Boosts Indigenous Rights in Landmark Ruling](#)," *BBC News* (22 September 2023).

⁵¹ Tom Phillips & Tiago Rogero, "[Brazil Apologizes to Indigenous People for Persecution during Dictatorship](#)," *Guardian* (3 April 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 73–74.

⁵² Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 74.

up in 1995 to investigate crimes committed during the military dictatorship (1964–1985). In December 2022, the CEMDP had terminated its work after then President Jair Bolsonaro (in office between 2019–2023) had not renewed its mandate [See NCH *Annual Reports 2008, 2020*].⁵³

On 6 January 2025, the government of the State of Rio de Janeiro closed the Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Aperj; Public Archives of the State of Rio de Janeiro) for an indefinite period, with its director Victor Travancas citing “imminent risks of fire and structural collapse.” Aperj housed documents dating from ca. 1750 onward and containing all the records of the secret police Departamento de Ordem Política e Social (DOPS; Department of Political and Social Order) since its foundation in 1924, including documents relating to the surveillance of political opponents of the military regime (1964–1985). Paulo Knauss, director of the Museum of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute and former Aperj director, suggested that the closure of Aperj could be linked to the increased attention for the case of Rubens Paiva (1929–1971), a former anti-regime politician who was imprisoned, tortured, and killed by State agents in 1971, following the 2024 release of the successful film *I’m Still Here*, which chronicled his case. The Brazilian far right unsuccessfully attempted to boycott the film, and the closure of Aperj was probably an offshoot of this political strategy, as it stored documents related to Paiva’s political assassination.

On [7] January 2025, the right-wing governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro Cláudio Castro dismissed Travancas without warning for taking the decision to close Aperj unilaterally. Travancas declared that his dismissal was not only linked to the closure but also to his efforts to combat staff absenteeism – according to him, 70% of the personnel of Aperj (26 employees) received salaries without working. Travancas announced legal action against the material and staff situation at Aperj. On 9 January 2025, left-wing politician Reimont Luiz Otoni Santa Barbara launched a petition against the closure of Aperj and for the renovation of the building.⁵⁴

In January 1835, as part of the biggest urban slave revolt in over 350 years of slavery in Brazil, a group of around 600 Malê (enslaved or formerly enslaved Muslims of Yoruba origin) attempted to seize control of Salvador, the capital of Bahia state. The revolt was violently suppressed by police forces, who killed seventy Malê. Shortly after, the United States diplomat and sugar trader, Gideon T. Snow, stole the skull of one of the Malê and took it to Boston for eugenic research. Afterward, it ended up in Harvard University’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. In the fall of 2022, a report by

⁵³ “[Lula rétablit une commission sur les crimes de la dictature](#),” *La Presse* (4 July 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 73–74; Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 36, 103.

⁵⁴ Juliana Dal Piva, “[Governo Cláudio Castro fecha arquivo que guarda dados de crimes da ditadura](#),” *ICL Notícias* (7 January 2025); Juliana Dal Piva, “[Diretor denuncia situação de arquivo com dados da ditadura e é exonerado por Castro](#),” *ICL Notícias* (8 January 2025).

Harvard's Steering Committee on Human Remains in University Museum Collections recommended that the remains of at least nineteen individuals, including the Malê skull and another Brazilian skull which had been "exhumed from the 'streets of Rio de Janeiro'," should be repatriated. Following the report, the Arakunrin (meaning "brother" in Yoruba), a group of academics and cultural figures from Bahia, started negotiations about the two skulls with Harvard University, which were joined by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in late 2024. Before the ministry joined, the Peabody Museum had repeatedly stalled negotiations. Afterwards it expressed its intention to repatriate both skulls together under the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2003, 2005, 2021–2023*]. However, the NAGPRA required information about the legitimate descendant community that would receive the remains, which was complicated in the case of the second skull of an unknown person, leading to the repatriation process being stalled again.⁵⁵

On 7 April 2025, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Bernard Duhaime, issued preliminary observations made after conversations with many official and civil society representatives, including the National Archives and the Forum on Memory, Truth, Integral Reparation, Non-Repetition and Justice for Indigenous Peoples, during a nine-days visit to Brazil. He recommended that the government urgently implement and expand the transitional justice package proposed in the final report of the 2011 *Comissão Nacional da Verdade* (National Truth Commission) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2013–2016, 2022*]. Among other things, he noted with great concern the measures adopted during the Bolsonaro administration (2019–2023) to remove references to the military dictatorship (1964–1985) from school curricula and to censor or criminalize teachers who educated on these subjects, accusing them of indoctrination [See NCH *Annual Reports 2019–2022*]. He called on the authorities to integrate human rights education, including history teaching about the dictatorship, in school curricula and to ensure that revisionist or negationist theories about the dictatorship not be taught in schools.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Tiago Rogero, "[Brazil Fights Harvard to Reclaim African Rebel's Skull after 190 Years](#)," *Guardian* (5 March 2025); [Report of the Steering Committee on Human Remains in University Museum Collections](#) (Boston: Harvard University, 2022).

⁵⁶ United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Bernard Duhaime, "[Preliminary Observations: Visit to Brazil \(30 March to 7 April 2025\)](#)" (statement; Rio de Janeiro, 7 April 2025); United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "[Brazil Must Fully Address Violations of the Dictatorship to Guarantee Human Rights and Democracy](#)" (7 April 2025).

BULGARIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–1998, 2002, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015–2017, 2019–2020, 2022, 2024.

On 7 November 2024, clashes broke out between a group of several hundred nationalists, including well-known far-right politicians, police forces and people who were waiting in line to attend the premiere of the John Malkovich-directed Bernard Shaw play *Arms and the Man*, situated during the 1885 Serbo–Bulgarian War, at the National Theater in Sofia. Several theatergoers had rocks and eggs thrown at them, while others were reportedly blamed by police officers for having provoked the protests by attending the play. The play, which criticized the glorification of war and violence, was reportedly interpreted by nationalist groups as an insult to the memory of Bulgarian soldiers who fought during that war.⁵⁷

BURKINA FASO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001, 2004, 2005, 2013, 2015–2018, 2021–2023.

See Niger.

BURUNDI

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2001–2003, 2005–2015, 2017–2021, 2024.

In May 2024, the mandate of the Commission Vérité et Réconciliation (CVR; Truth and Reconciliation Commission) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*] was renewed for a further four years. In a significant expansion of its remit, it assumed responsibility for cases that were left unresolved by the Commission Nationale des Terres et Autres Biens (CNTB; National Commission for Land and Other Properties) after the latter's mandate ended in 2022, as well as new land dispute cases. Between 2006 and 2022, the CNTB was charged with resolving land and other property issues that had arisen since independence in 1962. The CVR law stated that there was no judicial appeal against its decisions.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Svetoslav Todorov, "[Bulgarian Nationalists Disrupt Premiere of John Malkovich-Directed Play](#)," *Balkan Insight* (8 November 2024).

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 111, 113.

In August 2024, survivors and relatives of victims of the 2004 Gatumba Refugee Camp Massacre filed criminal cases in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) alleging genocide and crimes against humanity. The complaints were further shared with the International Criminal Court in The Hague, The Netherlands. On 13 August 2004, the Forces nationales de liberation (FNL; National Forces of Liberation), a Hutu Burundian rebel movement, had killed more than 150 predominantly Banyamulenge from South Kivu province, DRC, and injured 106, while sparing most other ethnic groups living in the camp.⁵⁹

See also Belgium.

⁵⁹ Clémentine de Montjoye, "[Renewed Hope for Justice for Burundi Massacre](#)," *Human Rights Watch* (14 August 2024).

CAMBODIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999–2018, 2020–2023.

On 17 October 2024, six United Nations rapporteurs wrote an allegations letter to the government concerning the forced eviction and resettlement of at least 40,000 people, including Indigenous Peoples, from their homes and lands in Angkor. The evictions and resettlement were allegedly carried out without the Indigenous Peoples' free, prior and informed consent, meaningful consultation, due process, redress including compensation, and without the provision of adequate housing of their choice and of equal quality at the resettlement site. The resettlement plans had been made to protect Angkor's UNESCO World Heritage Status, following a 1992 UNESCO report which indicated that living around the restricted area of Angkor was inappropriate to preserve the archaeological site [See NCH *Annual Reports 2009, 2011–2012*].⁶⁰

CAMEROON

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010, 2012–2014, 2016, 2020–2021, 2023.

On 21 and 28 January 2025, respectively, the Commission chargée de travailler sur l'action de la France au Cameroun pendant la colonisation et après l'indépendance du pays (Commission to Study France's Activities in Cameroon during the Colonial Period and after the Independence of the Country; nicknamed the "Commission Mémoire," Memory Commission – a team of researchers from Cameroon and France commissioned to investigate the role played by France in the repression of Cameroonian independence movements between 1945–1971 – handed its findings to Presidents Paul Biya of Cameroon and Emmanuel Macron of France [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*]. The report traced the genesis of the confrontation between the French colonial authorities and the pro-independence opposition (1945–1955), the repression of the latter and the war led by the French army (1955–1960),

⁶⁰ United Nations Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on the right to food; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, [Allegations Letter AL KHM 1/2024](#) (17 October 2024); [Allegations Letter AL JPN 3/2024](#) (17 October 2024); [Allegations Letter AL FRA 8/2024](#) (17 October 2024); [Allegations Letter AL OTH 136/2024](#) (17 October 2024); and [Response from Japan](#) (10 December 2024); [Response from UNESCO World Heritage Center](#) (14 December 2024); [Response from Cambodia](#) (17 December 2024).

the French involvement in Cameroon after independence in 1960 (1960–1965), and political, diplomatic, and military cooperation between both countries (1965–1971).⁶¹

On 15 May 2025, in the lead-up to the 53rd celebration of the 20 May 1972 unification of Cameroon (also known as Unity Day) – when Eastern and Western Cameroon voted to reject the federal structure that had been established by a 1961 United Nations plebiscite, which was itself the result of the post–1919 carve-up of Cameroon in a French and British Mandate as part of the League of Nations system – security forces arrested dozens of students from the University of Bamenda, Northwest Region. The arrests came amid weeks of violence, including killings and kidnappings, allegedly by Ambazonian separatists. The arrests were condemned by university authorities, human rights activists and academics as illegal and arbitrary arrests under the pretext of maintaining law and order [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*].⁶²

CANADA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2000, 2002–2003, 2005–2006, 2008–2009, 2012–2024.

In 2024, the majority of the 94 calls to action listed in the 2015 report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had still not been implemented [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016, 2021–2022*].⁶³

The 2024 final report of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unknown Graves and Burial Sites [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] acknowledged that Indian Residential Schools were “colonial institutions of genocide” and called on the government to implement an independent, Indigenous-led investigation.⁶⁴

On 10 January 2024, journalist Brandi Morin was arrested while she was reporting on an Indigenous encampment in Edmonton, Alberta. After pressure from human rights organizations, she was released. Morin reported extensively on Indigenous land and environmental rights and won awards for her work on topics related to truth and reconciliation, including residential school graves.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Elias Ngalame, “[Report’s 1,000 Pages Fill Gaps about Africa’s Colonial Past](#),” *University World News* (30 January 2025).

⁶² Elias Ngalame, “[Scores of Students Arrested Ahead of Unity Day Celebrations](#),” *University World News* (21 May 2025).

⁶³ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 119.

⁶⁴ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 40, 119.

⁶⁵ PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 31.

In June 2024, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) released a progress report on the fifth anniversary of the release of the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls [See NCH *Annual Report 2020*]. The report found that only two of the inquiry's 231 recommendations had been fully implemented, with most showing limited or no progress.⁶⁶

In June and July 2024, the Asubpeeschoseewagong Netum Anishinabek (Grassy Narrows) First Nation filed a series of lawsuits against the federal government and the provincial government of Ontario over mercury dumping in the Wabigoon rivers since 1962, alleging violations of First Nation treaty rights and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through the 1990 Mining Act. On 11 July, in the first hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the First Nation argued that the mercury dumping amounted to potential human rights violations under the 1948 American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, detailing health issues and environmental damage and citing the federal and provincial government's ongoing failure to prevent further poisoning and provide adequate reparation.⁶⁷

In August 2024, the Kanien'kehá:ka Kahnistensera (Mohawk Mothers), who demanded archaeological digs at the former Royal Victoria Hospital site in Montreal due to the suspected presence of Indigenous children's graves, lost their case before the Quebec Court of Appeal. The court overturned a lower court decision requiring McGill University to respect an agreement on archaeological excavations at the site.⁶⁸

On 27 May 2021, a mass grave containing the remains of 215 Indigenous children had been discovered on the grounds of a former residential school near the town of Kamloops, British Columbia [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Since then debates have been held over the question whether the bodies of the dead should be exhumed or left to rest. Investigations were further complicated by the unwillingness, despite frequent promises, of the government and the Catholic Church to give access to archives pertaining to the residential school system [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2022, 2024*].

As of September 2024, no exhumations had taken place. This fueled skepticism of the existence of graves in some conservative Catholic and right-wing activists, despite abundant evidence including a 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission report that had found that between the 1870s and 1996 the government had removed about 150,000 aboriginal children from their homes and sent them to church-

⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 91.

⁶⁷ Graham Freeman, "[Deep Dive: Grassy Narrows Community Launches Legal Actions against Canadian Governments](#)," *3Eco* (24 July 2024); "[Canada First Nation Appeals Mercury Contamination Case to Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](#)," *International Center for Transitional Justice* (25 July 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 119.

⁶⁸ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 40, 119.

run “residential schools,” in what it described as a “culture of genocide” targeting Indigenous people [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Security guards protecting potential gravesites were reportedly confronted with people showing up late at night with shovels, supposedly to dig at the sites.⁶⁹

In mid-September 2024, the Canadian Medical Association, an organization representing more than 100,000 physicians and medical trainees, issued an apology for the historical and continuous maltreatment of Indigenous people in the national health system. The apology was part of a report, following four years of research in archives and among parliamentary records some dating back as far as 150 years. The report found examples of abuse, including sexual abuse, forced sterilization, nutritional experiments, and the use of experimental tuberculosis vaccines, among others. In one example, a six-year experiment that ran until 1973 exposed Inuit people to extreme cold and doctor-inflicted pain to test sensory responses. The association further promised to review its ethical and professional codes in order to battle racism, prejudices, and ongoing worse health outcomes.⁷⁰

See also United States.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2006–2009, 2011–2012, 2014–2024.

On 3 May 2024, security forces closed the offices of the Commission Vérité, Justice, Réparation et Réconciliation (CVJRR; Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission), which had been established in 2020 “to investigate, establish the truth and assign responsibility for the serious national events that have occurred since 1959 – the year that David Dacko (1930–2003) took over the leadership of the Mouvement pour l’évolution sociale de l’Afrique noire, the first ruling party after independence from France in 1960 [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*]. Three days later, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Communication cited internal rivalry and mismanagement of resources as reasons for the government’s decision and announced a recruitment procedure for new commissioners. The government’s explanations were broadly confirmed by the CVJRR commissioners, victims’ organizations and other human rights groups, who variously cited infighting, overt government

⁶⁹ Ian Austen, “[What Lies Beneath Canada’s Former Indigenous School Sites Fuels a Debate](#),” *New York Times* (20 September 2024).

⁷⁰ Vjosa Isai, “[Canadian Doctors Group Apologizes for Health Harms to Indigenous People](#),” *New York Times* (21 September 2024).

influence in the commission, and limited results (after they were sworn in in July 2021, the commission had held no public hearing and had heard less than a dozen people).⁷¹

CHAD

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2012, 2015–2016, 2024.

During 2024, limited compensation was paid out to victims of former President Hissène Habré (1942–2021), who died of Covid-19 in August 2021 while serving a life sentence. Habré had been convicted of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and torture, including sexual violence and rape during his term (1982–1990), by the Extraordinary African Chambers in the Senegalese court system on 30 May 2016 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2015–2016* under *Chad*, and *Annual Reports 2013, 2017–2018* under *Senegal*]. In February 2024, following a meeting between President Idriss Déby and three Chadian victims' associations, the government began making payments of 10 billion CFA francs (US\$ 16.5 million) to 10,700 victims, including prison survivors and families of those killed under Habré, who would each receive 925,000 CFA (US\$ 1,529). This was less than ten percent of what courts in Senegal and Chad had awarded. The victims' associations welcomed the payments but insisted on their right to more complete compensation [See NCH *Annual Report 2023* under *Chad*].

In October 2024, police forcibly canceled a conference in the capital N'Djamena that was planned to discuss justice for the victims of the abuses under Habré. A former Human Rights Watch counsel, who was to be a keynote speaker at the conference, was briefly detained at the Direction générale du renseignement et de l'investigation (Directorate General for Intelligence and Investigation), and then expelled.⁷²

CHILE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998–2024.

In March 2023, President Gabriel Boric (in office since 2022) announced the National Search Plan to find and identify the people who “disappeared” during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1990)

⁷¹ Rodrigue le Roi Benga, “[Central African Republic: Why the Truth Commission Was Dismissed](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (21 June 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 121–122.

⁷² Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 103.

and prosecute those responsible [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*]. However, human rights groups expressed concern over the participation of the Servicio Médico Legal (SML; Legal Medical Service), which was legally mandated to play a leading role in all forensic investigations. The SML had been marred by controversy, including because of a February 2023 investigation that had found it responsible for leaving 89 boxes of dictatorship-era evidence, including unidentified human remains, to decay in a basement [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*].

Additionally, concerns arose over the continuity of the Plan after measures ensuring its permanent operation after the end of Boric's term in 2026 were not approved. Several right-wing candidates for the 2025 presidential elections had deep family ties with the Pinochet regime and had previously expressed support for his regime. In [April] 2025, opposition leader Evelyn Matthei (whose father, Air Force General Fernando Matthei Aube, served as Minister of Health between 1976–1978) called the 1973 coup that dethroned President Salvador Allende (1908–1973; in office between 1970–1973) “necessary” to avoid Chile becoming a Communist country and referred to the victims of the junta's mass human rights violations as “crazy people ... who did a lot of damage.”

On 30 August 2024, also known as the International Day of the Detained and the Disappeared, Boric announced a bill to allow courts and other state agencies access to testimonies of thousands of people tortured by the dictatorship that had previously been kept secret, in an effort to support attempts to locate the whereabouts of the disappeared.⁷³

On [25] March 2025, members of parliament Tomás Hirsch and Ana María Gazmuri proposed a bill that would outlaw erecting monuments for or naming streets and squares after former dictator Augusto Pinochet (in power between 1973–1990). They explicitly drew on similar bills in Austria and Germany outlawing the memorialization of Nazi collaborators.⁷⁴

See also United States.

⁷³ “[Chile: Boric realizará un acto por el aniversario del golpe de Pinochet](#),” *Página 12* (11 September 2024); Fletcher Reveley, “[Grave Mistakes: The History and Future of Chile's ‘Disappeared’](#),” *Undark* (19 February 2025); “[Boric Condemns Presidential Hopeful's Remarks Regarding Pinochet's Regime](#),” *Merco Press* (17 April 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 124.

⁷⁴ “[Diputados presentan proyecto que prohíbe usar el nombre de Pinochet para calles, plazas o monumentos](#),” *Soy Valparaíso* (25 March 2025).

CHINA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–2024.

After a series of incidents in June–September 2024, in which foreigners were stabbed, the influence of xenophobic online posts accusing Chinese nationals of not being patriotic enough was criticized, as was the slow and weak reaction of the government against them. One of the stabbings, in which a ten-year-old boy died at the gates of a Japanese school in Shenzhen, southern China, took place on 18 September, the anniversary of the Mukden incident – a false flag event used as a *casus belli* for the Japanese occupation of Manchuria (1931–1945). More than two hundred people signed two protest statements in their real names during memorial campaigns for the boy despite possible retaliation by state security.⁷⁵

On 26 August 2024, police in Sanhe, Hebei Province, arrested artist Gao Zhen on charges of “slandering heroes and martyrs” – referring to a 2021 amendment to the 2018 Heroes and Martyrs’ Protection Law that allowed for people who “insulted, slandered or infringed upon” the memory of China’s national heroes and martyrs to be sentenced to up to three years in prison [See NCH *Annual Reports 2018, 2021–2022*]. Gao and his brother were famous for their artworks, including a series of statues intended to “reassess Mao’s Cultural Revolution” (1966–1976) depicting former Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party Mao Zedong (1893–1976). Gao, who lived in the United States but had come to visit his family in Sanhe, and his brother had frequently clashed with authorities before, ranging from having their exhibitions shut to having their studios raided. In April 2025 he was still reported in prison.⁷⁶

On 12 June 2025, the multinational tech conglomerate Tencent filed a complaint against GreatFire – a website monitoring the online censorship system in China (also known as the Great Firewall), assisting Chinese web users in circumventing this censorship, and archiving previously censored websites and posts – for trademark and copyright infringement, cybersquatting, and unfair competition over the latter’s platform FreeWeChat (created in 2016) which archived censored, deleted or blocked posts on the widely used Chinese app WeChat (owned by Tencent). Although GreatFire’s hosting provider complied with the request, GreatFire argued, among others, that its archived content was user-generated

⁷⁵ Tessa Wong, Fan Wang & Ian Tang, “[The Dangers of China’s Cyber-Nationalism](#),” *BBC News* (14 October 2024); Li Yuan, “[Killing of Japanese Boy Leaves Chinese Asking: Is This My Country?](#)” *New York Times* (14 October 2024).

⁷⁶ Yan Zhuang & Zixu Wang, “[Gao Zhen, Artist Who Critiqued the Cultural Revolution, Is Detained in China](#),” *New York Times* (2 September 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 106; Amnesty International, “[China: Prominent Artist Arrested For His Work: Gao Zhen](#)” (Urgent Action 106/24, Index: ASA 17/8821/2024; London: AI, 5 December 2024); Network of Concerned Historians, “[China: US-based Gao Zhen Detained on Charge of ‘Slandering Heroes and Martyrs’ for Criticizing Mao for Cultural Revolution Atrocities](#)” (6 February 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 126.

and originally public on WeChat, and that the archiving and commentary served the public interest and met fair use criteria. It called the complaint an abuse of intellectual property law to achieve censorship by proxy.⁷⁷

Hong Kong

On 26 January 2024, United States streaming service Amazon Studios released *Expats*, a drama series tracing the lives of three American women in Hong Kong. Advertised as a worldwide release, its first two episodes were censored in Hong Kong allegedly because they took place against the backdrop of the 2014 pro-democracy Umbrella Movement [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*].⁷⁸

Throughout 2024 and 2025, criminal trials against organizers of and participants in the annual vigil to commemorate the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre continued:

- On 30 May 2024, the High Court of Hong Kong found fourteen of the sixteen accused guilty of subversion under the 2020 National Subversion Law (NSL). These included former journalist and opposition politician Gwyneth Ho Kwai-lam [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*], who was sentenced to seven years in prison; student protester and activist Joshua Wong Chi-fung [See NCH *Annual Reports 2017, 2020–2021*], who was sentenced to 4.5 years in prison; opposition politician Leung Kwok-hung, who was sentenced to six years and nine months in prison; and opposition politician Wu Chi-wai, who was sentenced to four years and five months in prison. All of them had previously been sentenced to prison for their participation in the 2020 vigil.⁷⁹
- In February 2025, the High Court of Hong Kong again delayed the trials of the former chairs of the Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, Lee Cheuk-yan [See NCH *Annual Reports 2020–2022*], Chow Hang-tung [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2024*], and Albert Ho Chun-Yan [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*]. The Alliance, which had been set up in May 1989 to commemorate the massacre and demand accountability, had been forced to disband in September 2021 [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Lee, Chow, and Ho had already been in pre-trial detention

⁷⁷ “[Tencent Attempts to Silence FreeWeChat in Trademark Smokescreen Attack](#),” *GreatFire* (10 July 2025); Mackenzie Argent, “[Censorship of an Archive: Chinese Tech Corporation Seeks Closure of Crucial Social Media Archive](#),” *Index on Censorship* (press release; 18 July 2025).

⁷⁸ Helen Davidson, “[Amazon’s Expats Series Not Available in Hong Kong, Where It Is Set](#),” *Guardian* (29 January 2024).

⁷⁹ Jessie Pang & Edmund Ng, “[Hong Kong Activists Get Up to 14 Months in Prison for Banned Tiananmen Vigil](#),” *Reuters* (13 December 2021); Jessie Pang & James Pomfret, “[‘Hong Kong 47’ Trial: 14 Democrats Found Guilty in Landmark Subversion Case](#),” *Reuters* (30 May 2024); “[Joshua Wong Chi-fung](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); “[Gwyneth Ho Kwai-lam](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); “[Leung Kwok-hung](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); “[Wu Chi-wai](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024).

for more than three years and faced life imprisonment on subversion charges. All three had previously been in prison, including for the organization of and participation in the annual vigil. In late May 2024, additional proceedings were initiated against Chow, and security forces arrested her mother and six of her friends for “exploit[ing] an upcoming sensitive date to repeatedly publish posts with seditious intention on a social platform.”⁸⁰

- On 6 March 2025, businessman and founder of the *Apple Daily* newspaper Lai Chee-Ying (also known as Jimmy Lai) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2022*] concluded his testimony against charges of conspiracy to collude with foreign forces and to publish seditious material. Lai, who had spent more than 1,500 days in solitary confinement and was in poor health, faced life imprisonment. He had been sentenced multiple times on various charges, including to eighteen months’ imprisonment for “participating in and inciting participation in” the 2020 annual vigil.⁸¹

On [8] November 2024, authorities changed a lamppost, because its sign, FA8964, could be interpreted as referring to the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre (4 June 1989).⁸²

In [December] 2024, Cathay Pacific apologized for having included in its in-flight entertainment system an episode of the United States comedy series *Family Guy* that featured a scene depicting the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, after a social media complaint suggesting that it violated the 2020 national security law [See NCH *Annual Report 2021–2022*].⁸³

In the lead-up to the 4 June 2025 annual vigil for the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre (which had been banned by Chinese authorities since 2020), security forces increased surveillance, particularly on members of the Tiananmen Mothers, a group of relatives of the victims of the massacre [See NCH *Annual Reports 2004–2006, 2008–2009, 2017, 2023–2024*]. On 4 June, police officers arrested two people, Chen Po-chuan and Lui Yuk-lin, and took away ten others for allegedly committing a breach of the peace as some residents brought flowers and candles to commemorate the 36th anniversary of the massacre. Three remained in custody, while the other seven were released after questioning.

⁸⁰ “[China/Hong Kong: Amnesty International Recognizes Three Activists as Prisoners of Conscience](#),” *Amnesty International* (2 October 2024); “[Chow Hang-Tung](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); “[Lee Cheuk-yan](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); “[Albert Ho Chun-yan](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (last updated 31 October 2024); Hans Tse, “[Hong Kong ex-Lawmaker Albert Ho May Plead Guilty in Subversion Case against Tiananmen Vigil Group](#),” *Hong Kong Free Press* (21 February 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 131.

⁸¹ “[China/Hong Kong: Amnesty International Recognizes Three Activists as Prisoners of Conscience](#),” *Amnesty International* (2 October 2024); “[Jimmy Lai Chee-ying](#),” *Hong Kong Watch* (31 October 2024); “[Hong Kong Democrat Jimmy Lai Finishes Testifying in National Security Trial](#),” *NBC News* (6 March 2025).

⁸² Alice Yam & Wei Sze, “[Hong Kong ‘Upgrades’ Lamppost that Matched Tiananmen Massacre Date](#),” *Radio Free Asia* (11 November 2024).

⁸³ “[Cathay Pacific Apologises Over Inflight Family Guy Episode with Tiananmen Square Scene](#),” *Guardian* (4 December 2024).

Several international diplomatic missions marked the anniversary, including the British embassy which posted an animation of a man standing before tanks (an iconic picture that came to represent the massacre) on Weibo. The animation was quickly censored. United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued a commemorative statement, in response of which foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian announced that authorities had lodged a complaint against Rubio, arguing that his “wrong comments maliciously distort the facts of history” and adding that “with regard to the political turmoil that took place in the late 1980s, the Chinese government has long since come to the clear conclusion that the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the choice of history and the people.”⁸⁴

Tibet

In [early] 2024, Dhonyoe, a teacher of Tibetan language and history at Meruma Central Primary School in Sichuan province, had his teaching license suspended and was dismissed for promoting the use of the Tibetan language beyond the limits set by the government [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021, 2023*].⁸⁵

In a 8 July 2024 letter to the Chinese authorities, thirteen United Nations Special Rapporteurs criticized the widespread February 2024 crackdown on hundreds of peaceful Tibetan protesters against the construction of the Kamtok (Gangtuo) hydroelectric power plant, that would result in the forced displacement and relocation of Tibetans living along the Dri Chu (Jinsha) river from their ancestral villages and irreversible destruction of important cultural and religious sites, as well as irreversible or significant environmental impacts. The six monasteries along the riverbanks dating back to the thirteenth century and housing numerous ancient relics and murals of Buddha of historical and religious significance, including the 700-year-old Wontoe (Wangdui) Monastery, would be entirely flooded and erased as cultural resources. The authorities denied these allegations, saying that the cultural relics were relocated in their entirety, but it remained unclear how far the project had progressed.⁸⁶

In January 2025, the *New York Times* published its investigation on the forced, systematic separation of Tibetan children from their families and places of birth and their integration into boarding schools aimed at assimilating them into the Han-Chinese majority. It found that although Chinese Communist

⁸⁴ “[China: Address Tiananmen Massacre 36 Years On](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (3 June 2025); Jess Ma, Connor Mycroft, Joshua Kwok & Danny Mok, “[2 Arrested, 10 Taken Away as Hong Kong Police Ramp Up Tiananmen Vigil Patrols](#),” *South China Morning Post* (4 June 2025); Jessie Pang & Yimou Lee, “[Hong Kong Curbs Tiananmen Anniversary, As US and Taiwan Say World Must Remember](#),” *Reuters* (4 June 2025).

⁸⁵ Committee of Concerned Scientists, “[Teacher of the Tibetan Language Fired for Teaching](#)” (11 May 2024).

⁸⁶ United Nations Special Rapporteurs, “[Allegations Letter AL CHN 8/2024](#) (8 July 2024); People’s Republic of China, [Reply CHN/HR/2024/60](#) (12 September 2024); Tessa Wong, “[A Dam Ignited Rare Tibetan Protests](#),” *BBC News* (23 December 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 109.

Party (CCP) officials claimed that the enrollment into boarding schools was voluntary, the CCP had been closing local and privately run Tibetan schools, while strictly imposing its education rules. It also found evidence of physical punishment, despite it being officially outlawed in Chinese schools, in line with 2020 Chinese research that had found evidence of physical punishment in boarding schools for ethnic minorities, including Tibetans (but also Uyghurs and Inner Mongolians [See NCH *Annual Report 2021* under *Inner Mongolia*]). It further found the boarding school's education to contain many instances of political indoctrination, including the portrayal of the celebration of the failed Tibetan uprising of 1959, the subsequent expulsion of the Dalai Lama, and the Chinese takeover of Tibet as "Serf's Emancipation Day." CCP government websites promoted Xi Jinping's view that ethnic minorities outside of boarding schools were at risk of developing "erroneous" ideas about religion, history and ethnic relations.

In November 2022, a group of United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteurs had sent an allegations letter to the CCP government, warning that around a million Tibetan children were being affected by the assimilation policies through the residential school system [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*]. In 2022, three UN independent experts had expressed concern over the system, in what they described as a "policy of forced assimilation of the Tibetan identity into the dominant Han-Chinese majority" [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*]. The UN experts together with the Tibet Action Institute estimated that around seventy-five percent of Tibetan students above the age of six were in residential schools.⁸⁷

Xinjiang

Among the historians and related professionals imprisoned since 2015 were [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2022, 2024* for related lists]:

- Ghojaniyaz Yollugh Tekin ([1965/6]–), a researcher at the Aksu Education Institute specialized in Uyghur toponymy. In the late 1980s, Tekin had published an article titled "East Turkistan, West Turkistan, and the Concept of Turan," in which he had argued that the Uyghurs were part of a "Turkic world" – an argument reportedly rooted in the early-twentieth-century "Turanism" movement that posited the now widely challenged idea of an Ural-Altaic language family. Following the publication, Tekin was suspended from his teaching position and repeatedly interrogated throughout the 1990s. In 2017, he was arrested and in 2018 he was sentenced to seventeen years' in prison.⁸⁸

See also France, United States, Vietnam.

⁸⁷ Chris Buckley, "[How China Is Erasing Tibetan Culture, One Child at a Time](#)," *New York Times* (9 January 2025).

⁸⁸ Shohret Hoshur, "[Prominent Uyghur Historian Sentenced to 17 Years in Prison](#)," *Radio Free Asia* (21 February 2025).

COLOMBIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997–1998, 2000, 2004, 2006–2024.

In mid-March 2024, the first pilot project of the Justicia Especial para la Paz (JEP; Special Jurisdiction for Peace) – a transitional justice tribunal established by the 2016 peace agreement between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to prosecute the worst abuses of the internal armed conflict (1964–present) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016–2020*] – known as the “restorative system” or Sanciones Propias (“Special Sanctions”), began. Under the peace agreement, the JEP was given authority to commence two types of trials: adversarial trials, which could lead to up to twenty years in prison; and admissions of guilt by the perpetrators, that would result in five to eight years of “effective restrictions on freedoms and rights” outside of prison. In the first pilot, 46 former military officials, who took part in the extrajudicial execution of at least 6,402 civilians as part of the so-called “false positives” killings [See NCH *Annual Reports 2011–2013, 2021*], were forced to work on the restoration of high mountain forests around Bogotá.

The restorative system was criticized for choosing reparative justice over retributive justice, and was likened by some to effective impunity. Moreover, the Movimiento de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado (Movement of Victims of State-Sponsored Crimes) and several human rights organizations called for more meaningful collaboration with victims and relatives. In September 2024, JEP President Alejandro Ramelli Arteaga expressed concerns over insufficient financial resources to continue the implementation of the Special Sanctions. Fears for funding shortages were exacerbated by the 20 January 2025 funding freeze for USAID by United States President Donald Trump. On 22 April 2025, United Nations Special Representative for Colombia Carlos Ruiz Massieu called on the government of President Gustavo Petro to “step up its preparations to ensure that the conditions under which the sentences will be carried out are firmly in place.”⁸⁹

After he came to power on 7 August 2022, President Gustavo Petro repeatedly publicly glorified symbols of the guerrilla 19th of April Movement (M–19), of which he had been a member for twelve years. In 1990, members of the M–19 guerrilla had signed a peace deal with then President Virgilio Barco Vargas (in office between 1986–1990) and founded the Alianza Democrática M–19 (M–19 Democratic Alliance) political party. On 19 April 2024, Petro decreed a civic day to save water, coinciding with the founding date of M–19. On 26 April, speaking at his former high school in

⁸⁹ Andrés Bermúdez Liévano, “[Colombia’s JEP Unveils Alternative Sanctions But Remains Silent on Punishment](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (16 April 2024); Braeden Garrett, Tomasina Pearman & Clara Whitney, “[Can USAID’s Funding Freeze Put Colombia’s Peace Process at Risk?](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (15 March 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 135–136; “[Colombia: UN Mission Chief Stresses Need to Advance Implementation of Peace Deal](#),” *United Nations News* (22 April 2025).

Zipaquirá, he showed the M–19 flag. On other occasions, he publicly spoke about M–19 and the M–19 Democratic Alliance as one movement, blurring the distinction between the armed guerrilla and the political movement. Victims of M–19 and historical organizations criticized Petro’s behavior as divisive.⁹⁰

On [11 July] 2024, the Justicia Especial para la Paz (JEP; Special Jurisdiction for Peace) recognized crimes committed against the Wiwa Indigenous people during the internal armed conflict (1964–present) as ineligible for amnesty under the 2016 peace agreement. It further recognized the Arhuaco, Kankuamo and Kogui peoples as having been victims of human rights violations, and granted victim status to their ancestral territory in the Sierra Nevada de Gonawindua (Santa Marta), arguing that it endured “the destruction of ecosystems; the loss of traditional livelihoods; harm to sacred sites and knowledge systems; and loss of flora and fauna.”⁹¹

On 18 September 2024, the trial against Colonel Hernán Mejía Gutiérrez on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including involvement in the extrajudicial killing of 72 people in 2002 and 2003, committed during the armed internal conflict (1964–present) began in Valledupar. Mejía was a central figure in the so-called “false positives” killings: under pressure from superiors to boost body counts in their war against guerrillas, soldiers and officers abducted victims or lured them to remote locations under false pretenses (such as promises of work), shot them dead, placed weapons on their bodies, and reported them as enemy combatants killed in action [See NCH *Annual Reports 2011–2013, 2021*]. It was the first adversarial trial conducted by the Justicia Especial para la Paz (JEP; Special Jurisdiction for Peace), the tribunal that had been established by the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to prosecute the worst abuses of the conflict [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016–2020*].⁹²

On 5 December 2024, President Gustavo Petro asked the United States to declassify records on the 1985 Palace of Justice case. The request was seen as a step forward to clarify the motivations and actions of the M–19 insurgents who stormed the building on 6 November 1985, and the Colombian government’s responsibility for those who died in the ensuing fire and for those who disappeared in the aftermath. In seeking the records, Petro complied with a recommendation made by Colombia’s truth commission and a 2014 ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Petro was a member of the M–19 insurgent

⁹⁰ Andrés Bermúdez Liévano, “[Colombian President Speaks of Peace but Glorifies Armed Struggle](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (18 July 2024).

⁹¹ “[Colombia’s Special Jurisdiction for Peace Recognises Wiwa People and Their Ancestral Territory as Victims of International Crimes](#),” *International Federation for Human Rights* (11 July 2024); Jonathan Watts, “[Could 2024 Be the Year Nature Rights Enter the Political Mainstream?](#),” *Guardian* (1 January 2024).

⁹² Andrés Bermúdez Liévano, “[Colombia’s First Transitional Justice Adversarial Trial Opens](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (26 September 2024).

group, but at the time he was detained and not involved in the takeover of the building [See NCH *Annual Reports 2007–2008, 2011–2012, 2016, 2018, 2024*].⁹³

CONGO (Democratic Republic)

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998–2000, 2003–2024.

On 18 July 2024, the Kasai-Central provincial assembly extended the mandate of the Commission provinciale vérité, justice et réconciliation (CPVJR; Provincial Commission for Truth, Justice and Reconciliation), set up in July 2021 to investigate violence perpetrated during the Kamwina Nsapu conflict (2016–2017), in which around 3,000 people died and nearly two million were displaced according to the United Nations. Although the extension was praised, the provincial government was criticized for not having secured sufficient fundings for the CPVJR. Moreover, the CPVJR was itself criticized for inactivity, not securing any additional funding, nor pursuing any of the activities for which it was set up, including truth-seeking, establishing reparations mechanisms, and setting up listening centers for victims and relatives. The CPVJR published two reports (in 2022 and 2023) in which it stated that “nothing could be reported” on any of these activities.⁹⁴

See also Belgium, Burundi.

CONGO (Republic)

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2004–2006, 2008, 2010–2012, 2019.

COSTA RICA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010.

⁹³ National Security Archive, “[Colombia Asks U.S. to Declassify Records on 1985 Palace of Justice Case](#)” (Press Release; 6 December 2024).

⁹⁴ Caleb Kazadi, “[Kasai-Central Truth Commission Renewed Despite Meagre Record](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (29 August 2024).

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

See Ivory Coast.

CROATIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–2001, 2003–2013, 2015–2024.

In July 2024, United Nations Human Rights Committee experts asked the government about its efforts to improve regional cooperation in the prosecution of perpetrators of human rights violations, including war crimes and crimes against humanity during the Yugoslav Wars of Succession (1991–2001) and ensure reparations for victims of human rights violations and their families. During a state visit between 1 and 3 September 2024, Chief Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals Serge Brammertz reiterated his office's concerns about in-absentia trials and recommended further regional cooperation. In February 2024, Croatia had signed the Ljubljana–The Hague Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of the Crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and Other International Crimes.⁹⁵

On 25 July 2024, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced a travel ban for three top Montenegrin government officials, including speaker of parliament and leader of the Nova srpska demokratija (New Serb Democracy) party Andrija Mandić, for introducing a resolution in the Montenegrin parliament seeking recognition for crimes committed in the Jasenovac concentration camp by members of the Croatian Fascist Ustaše organization between August 1941 and April 1945 as “genocide” [See NCH *Annual Report 2024* under Montenegro]. The resolution was modeled after the then pending and later adopted United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Srebrenica [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*, under Bosnia and Herzegovina].⁹⁶

⁹⁵ “[In Dialogue with Croatia, Experts of the Human Rights Committee Commend Measures to Investigate War-Era Enforced Disappearances, Raise Issues Concerning Historic Hate Crimes and Corruption](#),” *United Nations Office at Geneva* (3 July 2024); Office of the Prosecutor, “[Chief Prosecutor Serge Brammertz Meets Croatian Officials](#),” *United Nations International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals* (5 September 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 141.

⁹⁶ “[Croatia Bans 3 Montenegro Officials in Diplomatic Row over WWII Death Camp](#),” *Al Jazeera* (25 July 2024); [United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Srebrenica](#) (A/RES/78/282) (30 May 2024).

CUBA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997–2002, 2006, 2010–2012, 2015–2016, 2018, 2021–2024.

On 18 June 2024, Jenny Pantoja Torres, a historian and anthropologist at the Miguel Enríquez Faculty of the University of Medical Sciences in Havana, was arrested together with writer Alina Bárbara López Hernández (see below), while they were on their way to a monthly peaceful protest against government censorship. Both were charged with attempting to assault police officers and temporarily placed under house arrest. On 18 July, Pantoja was again prevented from attending the protest, and five days later she was dismissed from her job, officially because of staff cuts. On 18 September, she was again arrested and released hours later. She specialized in Afro-Cuban religious practices.⁹⁷

On 18 September 2024, Afro-Cuban historian and activist Alexander Hall Lujardo and academic and writer Alina Bárbara López Hernández (see above) were summoned for their social media post in support of Cuban and Palestinian activists and critical of the government, continuing state harassment that began in November 2023 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].⁹⁸

CYPRUS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002, 2005, 2008–2011, 2013, 2015–2018, 2021–2022, 2024.

On 4 June 2025, Deputy Culture Minister Vasiliki Kassianidou ordered the immediate withdrawal of a book accompanying the “To the Stones” exhibition at the nineteenth International Architecture Biennale in Venice, Italy. Describing the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the book referred to “conflicts” rather than an invasion and contained the passage: “The war, through its dramatic and violent explosive brutality, led to forced population exchange, where the majority of Greek Cypriots were displaced from north to south, and the majority of Turkish Cypriots from south to north.” Historians estimate that around 200,000 Greek Cypriots and more than 50,000 Turkish Cypriots were displaced from their homes at the time. The withdrawal decision followed critical reporting in *Philelefteros* and backlash from the House Education Committee Chairman Pavlos Mylonas, who claimed that the book contained

⁹⁷ PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 35.

⁹⁸ PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 35.

“historical inaccuracies” and was “dangerous for our national cause.” The Fisherwomxn [*sic*] artist collective responsible for the exhibition and publication decried Kassianidou’s decision as censorship.⁹⁹

CZECH REPUBLIC

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997–1998, 2000, 2010, 2013–2024.

After a campaign that had begun in the 1970s, a memorial on the site of the Lety concentration camp, in which 327 Romani were killed during World War II, was finally opened in May 2024 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2018, 2023*].

See also New Zealand, Russia.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ “[Cyprus Orders Withdrawal of Venice Architecture Biennale Publication over 1974 References](#),” *Philenews* (4 June 2025); “[Artist Group Fisherwomxn Denounces Venice Biennale Publication Withdrawal as Censorship](#),” *Philenews* (6 June 2025); Evangelia Sizopoulou, “[Cyprus Artists Reject Government Demand to Withdraw Venice Biennale Book](#),” *Philenews* (11 June 2025).

¹⁰⁰ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 145.

DENMARK

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2006–2007, 2013, 2016–2020, 2022–2024.

On 19 February 2025, public broadcaster *DR* withdrew the documentary *Grønlands hvide guld* (Greenland’s white gold) and dismissed editor-in-chief Thomas Falbe after public and political backlash. The documentary followed the operation of Danish mining companies in Greenland between 1854 and 1987, arguing that they extracted, adjusted to today’s economy, nearly US\$ 59 billion worth of cryolite (a mineral crucial for producing aluminum) without returning much investment into Greenland’s economy. Danish Culture Minister Jakob Engel-Schmidt criticized the documentary for failing to differentiate between revenue and profit (a claim backed up by some economists and also addressed in the documentary) and for being released “at the worst moment” – it aired weeks before the 2025 Greenlandic general elections and in the context of United States President Donald Trump imperial claims on the country. For two weeks, *DR*’s news director Sandy French defended the documentary – which was hailed in Greenland as the first locally produced feature film – against criticism, but eventually cited an inaccurate graph in an earlier version of the documentary as a reason to withdraw the documentary and dismiss Falbe. *DR* also canceled a debate about the documentary that had been scheduled for broadcast. Shortly after *DR*’s withdrawal, the documentary was released by the International Sámi Film Institute in Kautokeino, Norway.¹⁰¹

DJIBOUTI

Previous *Annual Report* entry: 2008.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2013, 2023.

¹⁰¹ “[Controversial Doc Pulled, DR Editor Fired](#),” *Ritzua News* (20 February 2025); Nick Vivarelli, “[‘White Gold of Greenland’ Doc Adds Urgency to Arctic Island’s Push for Freedom Amid Trump Threat: It’s ‘Wanted to Be Independent for Decades’](#),” *Variety* (9 April 2025); Miranda Bryant, “[Greenland Documentary Forces Danes to Confront Their Colonial Heritage](#),” *Guardian* (13 April 2025).

ECUADOR

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2005–2007, 2009–2021.

On 5 December 2024, the Constitutional Court in Quito found the Japanese-owned Furukawa Plantaciones guilty of subjecting hundreds of workers to a system known as *servidumbre de la gleba* (“serfdom of the soil”) since the 1960s. The abaca plantation workers, predominantly of Afro-descent and from precarious economic positions, were forced to work under inhumane conditions, without access to basic services, and tied to the company through rent agreements and other contractual mechanisms, in what the court described as “a practice of servitude akin to slavery.” The court further condemned the government for enabling and failing to prevent the abuse, ordering it to issue legal reforms to end the system, and ordered the Furukawa Plantaciones to pay US\$ 120,000 to each of the 342 victims. The ruling, long called for by United Nations experts and human rights organizations, was hailed as historic.¹⁰²

EGYPT

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–2001, 2003, 2006–2007, 2010–2024.

On 31 January 2024, the Cairo International Book Fair banned *Le Harem politique: Le Prophète et les femmes* (1987; *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*) by Moroccan sociologist Fatema Mernissi (1940–2015). The book investigated the position of women in Islam and the different roles of the veil from its origins in the seventh century *Ummah* (religious community) until the present day.¹⁰³

See also Saudi Arabia.

¹⁰² Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “[Ecuador: Victims of Modern Slavery Must Have Remedy and Reparation in Ongoing Lawsuits, UN Experts Say](#),” (press release; 29 April 2024); Noor Mahtani, “[La Corte Constitucional de Ecuador confirma que hubo esclavitud moderna en las haciendas de Furukawa](#),” *El País* (5 December 2024); “[Ecuadoran Workers Accuse ‘Monster’ Japanese Company of Exploitation](#),” *France24* (11 December 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 153.

¹⁰³ Ghita Zine, “[After Saudi Arabia, Egypt Restricts Sale of Fatema Mernissi’s Book on Feminism](#),” *Yabiladi* (2 February 2024); Margalit Fox, “[Fatema Mernissi, a Founder of Islamic Feminism, Dies at 75](#),” *New York Times* (9 December 2015).

EL SALVADOR

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2023.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2019.

See Gambia.

ERITREA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2008, 2016, 2018, 2024.

In a 7 May 2024 report, United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Eritrea Mohamed Abdelsalam Babiker reiterated that most recommendations made by international and regional human rights mechanisms – including those published in 2016 by the UN Commission of Inquiry, established in 2014 to investigate crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, since Eritrean independence from Ethiopia in 1991 – remained unimplemented. The government of President Isaias Afwerki (in office since 1993) continued to deny Babiker access to Eritrea.¹⁰⁴

See also Ethiopia.

ESTONIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007, 2010, 2015, 2017, 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea, Mohamed Abdelsalam Babiker](#) (A/HRC/56/24) (7 May 2024); Hilary Power, “[UN Should Ensure Continued Scrutiny of Rights Crisis in Eritrea](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (2 July 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 164.

ESWATINI

Previous *Annual Report* entries under Swaziland: 2011, 2013, 2016–2018; under Eswatini: 2023–2024.

In October 2024, Minister of Labor and Social Security Phila Buthelezi decided to terminate scholarships for bachelors in the arts and humanities, including history, geography, and African languages, from August 2025 onward. Buthelezi cited the 2022 Eswatini National Skills Audit, which had concluded that arts and humanities graduates struggled finding work and needed postgraduate education to get a job. The decision was criticized by many, including the deputy secretary-general of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers, Mcolisi Ngcamphalala, who expressed concern over its effects on the already existing shortage of primary and secondary school teachers. Friction Nhlanhla Mayisela, a lecturer of law at the Southern Africa Nazarene University in Manzini, argued that the decision signaled King Mswati III's fear of pro-democracy activists, many of whom were graduates in history, sociology, and law. Already in 2012, the government had terminated scholarships for legal undergraduate studies.¹⁰⁵

ETHIOPIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998–2011, 2015–2024.

In February 2024, the Transitional Justice Working Group of Experts – set up by the Minister of Justice after the November 2022 peace treaty between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] – issued its report, recommending prosecution for crimes committed since 1995 (when Ethiopia adopted a federal constitution) and an open-ended temporal scope for truth-seeking, reconciliation, and reparation. The dual time frame was criticized by some as creating a mechanism of “reconciliation without accountability.” A previous government draft, the Green Paper “Policy Options for Transitional Justice,” had been criticized, including by the United Nations-mandated International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE), for its failure to investigate human rights violations, lack of participation of opposition and civil society groups in its consultations, and exclusion of crimes committed by Eritrean forces [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. In a televised speech to parliament, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (in office since 2018) stated

¹⁰⁵ Phathizwe Zulu, “[Government Pulls Plug on Funding for Humanities Students](#),” *University World News* (27 November 2024).

that the Ethiopian National Defense Force did not “commit massacres” during the Tigrayan War (2020–2022), despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Aaron Maasho & Martin Witteveen, “[Ethiopia’s Reconciliation Policy Is a Farce](#),” *Foreign Policy* (27 February 2024); Zekarias Beshah Abebe, “[As Ethiopia Moves Forward With Its Transitional Justice Initiative, Challenges Abound](#),” *International Peace Institute* (2 April 2024); Alexis Okeowo, “[Ethiopia’s Agony: ‘I Have Never Seen This Kind of Cruelty in My Life’](#),” *New York Times* (5 December 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 33, 167.

FIJI

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2004, 2006, 2010.

FINLAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2011–2012, 2017, 2020, 2022, 2024.

On 8 September 2024, 42 human skulls were returned from Sweden and reburied in Pälkäne. The skulls had been taken by researchers from the Swedish Karolinska Institute, a medical university, in 1873 as part of a research campaign of exhuming Finnish graves to investigate alleged differences between the Finnish and Swedish “race.” Research into the skulls, most of which were estimated to have been buried between the sixteenth and nineteenth century, fitted within then popular and since discredited theories of eugenics and was alleged to have been aimed at proving the inferiority of the Finnish “race.” In 1921, the Swedish Parliament established the State Institute for Racial Biology, where scientists researched the alleged “degeneration” of the Swedish gene pool. Between the 1920s and 1950s, Swedish researchers also performed medical experiments on the Indigenous Sámi population [See NCH *Annual Reports 2017, 2020, 2022* under Finland, and *Annual Report 2023* under Norway].¹⁰⁷

FRANCE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–1999, 2001–2009, 2011–2014, 2016–2018, 2020–2024.

On 31 August 2024, an opinion piece in *Le Monde* criticized the Musée Guimet and the Musée du Quai Branly, both in Paris, for erasing the name “Tibet” from its exhibitions featuring Tibetan cultural artefacts, claiming that they had “bowed” to the Chinese government’s “wishes.” A previous exhibition in Nantes in 2020 about Mongol Emperor Genghis Khan (1155/1162–1227) had been stalled after the Chinese Bureau of Cultural Heritage had demanded control over exhibition brochures, legends, and maps [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*].¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Amelia Nierenberg & Johanna Lemola, “[After a Century and a Half in Sweden, Finnish Skulls Return Home](#),” *New York Times* (8 September 2024).

¹⁰⁸ “[Des musées français courbent l’échine devant les exigences chinoises de réécriture de l’histoire et d’effacement des peuples](#),” *Le Monde* (31 August 2024); Bruno Philip, “[French Museums and the Risk of Erasing Tibet](#),” *Le Monde* (27 September 2024); Filip Noubel & Choekyi Lhamo, “[French Museums Participate in Beijing’s Erasure of Tibetan Identity](#),” *Global Voices* (10 October 2024).

In September 2024, shortly before becoming Minister of the Interior, Bruno Retailleau stated in an interview that “colonization also included beautiful moments.” The statement echoed a 2005 law passed by later President Nicholas Sarkozy (in office between 2007–2012), which called for educational curricula to “recognize in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, notably in North Africa” (a passage repealed in 2006) and asserting that France had brought “civilization” by building schools, roads and hospitals (which continued to be part of the law) [See NCH *Annual Report 2006*]. Various investigations in 2024 found examples of the “positive effects” of colonialism in especially primary school history textbooks. Historian and co-chairman of an Algerian-French research commission, Benjamin Stora [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021, 2023*] further criticized the curricula for not addressing the origins of colonialism.¹⁰⁹

On 4 November 2024, the second trial over the murder of history and geography teacher Samuel Paty (1973–2020), who was attacked with a knife and beheaded near his school in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine on 16 October 2020 by Abdullakh Anzorov, an 18-year-old radicalized Islamist of Chechen origin [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021, 2024*], began in Paris. The trial featured eight people (two men accused of identifying Paty as a “blasphemer” on the internet, two friends of Anzorov who allegedly gave him logistical help, and four others who offered support on chatlines) facing up to thirty years in prison on charges varying from association with a criminal terrorist group to complicity in terrorist murder. Around the same time, Paty’s school announced it would be renamed Samuel Paty School from 2025 onward. On 20 December 2024, the Paris court convicted all eight people to prison sentences ranging from one to sixteen years in prison. The presiding judge described Paty’s killing as an “irreparable attack on the Republic’s fundamental values.”¹¹⁰

On 9 December 2024, the Seventeenth Chamber of the Paris Tribunal (also known as the Press Chamber) convicted journalist and political scientist Charles Onana and his publisher Damien Serieyx of genocide denial related to Onana’s book *Rwanda, la vérité sur l’opération Turquoise: Quand les archives parlent* (2019; Rwanda, the Truth about Operation Turquoise: When the Archives Speak), fined them nearly US\$ 15,000 and ordered them to pay more than US\$ 11,000 to the three human rights group that sued them. The court found that Onana, who described the 1994 Rwandan genocide as “a scam, a hoax and a falsification of history” despite overwhelming evidence documenting the killing of

¹⁰⁹ Samia Lokmane, “[France: How the ‘Positive’ Role of Colonization Is Still Discussed in History Textbooks](#),” *Middle East Eye* (24 August 2024); Tassa Adidi, “[‘Inglorious Past’: France’s Rightward Shift Fuels Denial of Colonial Crimes in Algeria](#),” *Middle East Eye* (19 May 2025).

¹¹⁰ Kim Willsher, “[French Pupil’s Father to Go on Trial for Spreading Lies That Led to Teacher’s Islamist Beheading](#),” *Guardian* (3 November 2024); Ségolène Le Stradic, “[Second Trial in Teacher’s Killing Begins in France](#),” *New York Times* (4 November 2024); Hugh Schofield, “[Trial Begins over Beheading of Teacher Who Showed Prophet Muhammad Cartoon](#),” *BBC News* (4 November 2024); Aurelien Breeden, “[French Court Convicts 8 People Tied to Events That Led to Teacher’s Killing](#),” *New York Times* (20 December 2024).

800,000 predominantly Tutsis by radical Hutus (including in consecutive judgments by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda), had violated a 2017 amendment to the press law which carved out exceptions to freedom of expression like genocide denial. Onana's book followed from his Ph.D. thesis, which he had finished in 2017 at the Université Jean Moulin Lyon III. In the early 2000s, Lyon III had become the subject of a government inquiry after it was alleged to be a hotbed of Holocaust denial.¹¹¹

In late February 2025, journalist Jean-Michel Apathie was suspended for a week as expert analyst for broadcaster *RTL* after he had compared, in an interview, the June 1944 Oradour-sur-Glane massacre – in which a Waffen-SS unit killed 642 civilians in retribution for the execution of two Nazi commanders – with massacres committed by French forces in colonial Algeria. He stated that “[e]very year in France, we commemorate what happened in Oradour-sur-Glane – the massacre of an entire village. But we have committed hundreds of these, in Algeria. Are we aware of this?” And when asked whether French forces had “behaved like the Nazis,” he responded: “The Nazis behaved like us.”

Apathie's comments sparked a backlash from right-wing groups, including in newspaper *Le Figaro* which published an opinion piece characterizing Apathie as an “evangelist of wokeism [a popular right-wing derogative term for scholars of colonialism] who confuses journalism with morality.” After a series of complaints, the Autorité de régulation de la communication audiovisuelle et numérique (Regulatory Authority for Audiovisual and Digital Communication) announced an investigation into Apathie's comments citing a risk of “relativizing Nazism.” At the same time, several historians spoke out in defense of Apathie. Following his suspension, Apathie permanently resigned from *RTL*.¹¹²

On 11 March 2025, France Télévisions announced its decision to deprogram two documentary films scheduled for 16 March to free up time to cover negotiations between the United States and Russia over the Ukraine War (2014–present). Whereas it announced an alternative date for *Syrie: La Chute du clan Assad* (Syria: the fall of the Assad clan), it did not reprogram *Algérie, Sections Armes Spéciales* (Algeria, Special Weapons Sections) by historian Christophe Lafaye and filmmaker Claire Billet, about the use of chemical weapons by French forces in colonial Algeria. It remained freely accessible on its

¹¹¹ Adam Nossiter, “[French Court Finds Writer Guilty of Denying Rwandan Genocide](#),” *New York Times* (10 December 2024); Henri Rouso, *Le Dossier de Lyon III: Le rapport sur le racisme et le négationnisme à l'université Jean-Moulin* (Paris: Fayard, 2004).

¹¹² Paulin Césari, “[Jean-Michel Apathie, l'évangéliste du wokisme qui confond journalisme et morale](#),” *Le Figaro Vox* (5 March 2025); “[Journalist Quits Role after Comparing French Actions in Algeria to Nazi Massacre](#),” *Guardian* (9 March 2025); Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, “[A Debate on the Genocidal Nature of Colonialism Exists among Historians](#),” *Le Monde* (13 April 2025); “Apathie et ‘Oradour-sur-Glane en Algérie’: L’Arcom pointe un risque de ‘relativisation du nazisme’,” *Libération* (9 May 2025); Tassa Adidi, “[‘Inglorious Past’: France’s Rightward Shift Fuels Denial of Colonial Crimes in Algeria](#),” *Middle East Eye* (19 May 2025).

online platform. The decision not to reprogram sparked outrage and concern over the possibility to critically assess colonialism, exacerbated by the Apathie affair (see above).¹¹³

In [May] 2025, mayor of Marseille Benoît Payan announced that the annual 8 May Victory in Europe Day – commemorating the official surrender of Nazi Germany in World War II (1939–1945) – would be followed by a commemoration of the Sétif massacres, in which between 8 May and 26 June 1945 French forces killed an estimated 20,000 people in anti-colonial protests in Algeria. The municipal opposition accused Payan of “trying to rewrite history.”¹¹⁴

On 24 May 2025, German filmmaker (1927–2025) Marcel Ophüls died. For over a decade French National Television ORTF, backed by an official censorship commission, refused to show a 1969 two-part documentary it had originally sponsored, Ophüls’s *Le Chagrin et la pitié* (*The Sorrow and the Pity*). The documentary, part of a projected trilogy on World War II, showed the extensive French collaboration with the Jewish deportation during the Vichy regime (1940–1944) and criticized the idea that resistance against it had been widespread. The censorship commission cleared the film for cinemas in 1971. It was attacked across the political spectrum. When finally shown on television in 1981, it was denounced by a senator, himself an ex-member of the resistance, as “destroying myths of which the French still have need.”¹¹⁵

See also Algeria, Belgium, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Haiti, Morocco, Netherlands, Poland, Rwanda, Senegal, Syria, Türkiye, United States, Vietnam.

¹¹³ [“Guerre d’Algérie: France Télévisions revient sur sa décision de déprogrammer un documentaire sur l’usage des armes chimiques par la France,”](#) *L’Humanité* (11 March 2025); Tassa Adidi, [“‘Inglorious Past’: France’s Rightward Shift Fuels Denial of Colonial Crimes in Algeria,”](#) *Middle East Eye* (19 May 2025).

¹¹⁴ Fabien Binacchi, [“8-Mai à Marseille: Benoît Payan fait polémique en rendant hommage à ces victimes,”](#) *Actu* (7 May 2025); David Gormezano, [“Remembering Sétif, the VE Day Colonial Massacres That ‘Lost Algeria’ for France,”](#) *France 24* (9 May 2025); Tassa Adidi, [“‘Inglorious Past’: France’s Rightward Shift Fuels Denial of Colonial Crimes in Algeria,”](#) *Middle East Eye* (19 May 2025).

¹¹⁵ *Index on Censorship*, 1976, no. 2, 13; 1979, no. 6, 43; Derek Jones, ed., *Censorship: A World Encyclopedia* (London & Chicago 2001), 1770–1771; Jonathan Kandell, [“Marcel Ophüls, Myth-Shattering War Documentarian, Is Dead at 97,”](#) *New York Times* (26 May 2025).

GABON

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2016, 2018.

GAMBIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2016–2018, 2021–2024.

In 2024, the Gambia Center for Victims of Human Rights Violations expressed frustration at the lack of forensic experts to identify the bodies exhumed by the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) at the Yundum Barracks in 2019 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. On 11 November 1994, at least eleven soldiers had been tortured, killed on suspicion of planning a counter-coup against the July takeover by Jahya Jammeh (Chairman of the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council between 1994–1996; President between 1996–2017), and buried at the Yundum Barracks. After the exhumation, the bodies had been transferred and stored at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital in Banjul, where they had been since. Because of a lack of expertise, no DNA testing had been conducted to identify the bodies and promises to bring in foreign experts remained unheeded.¹¹⁶

On 15 December 2024, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) approved its partnership with the government to set up the Special Tribunal, a hybrid court agreed under the April 2024 Special Accountability Mechanism bill [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] to prosecute crimes against humanity, torture and other international crimes committed during the rule of President Yahya Jammeh (in office between 1996–2017). Some critics questioned the government's willingness to pursue the transitional justice agenda, citing its continuing resistance to issuing an arrest warrant for Jammeh, who lived in self-exile in Equatorial Guinea, and its unwillingness to allocate national funding for transitional justice mechanisms – a problem further exacerbated by the announcement of United States President Donald Trump on 20 January 2025 to largely dismantle the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 175; Mariam Sankanu, "[Gambia: Why After Four Years Identity of the Exhumed Remains Unknown](#)," *Justiceinfo.net* (24 August 2023).

¹¹⁷ Mariam Sankanu, "[Gambia: A Special Court in Search of Funds](#)," *Justiceinfo.net* (18 March 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 33, 175.

GEORGIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2003, 2010–2012, 2014, 2016, 2019, 2024.

On 28 April 2023, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled that the Russian Federation must pay € 130 million of compensation for the August 2008 invasion by Russian forces into Abkhazia and South Ossetia in violation of Georgia's territorial sovereignty. The ruling followed an earlier 2021 verdict in this interstate case. In April 2024, the ECtHR further noted that Russia continued to breach the European Convention on Human Rights, including by the illegal detention, torture, and murder of the ethnic Georgian population in the occupied territories. More than 90,000 internally displaced people continue to suffer health and safety risks after the invasion. The Russian State indicated its noncompliance with the verdict, pointing to domestic legislation asserting non-recognition of ECtHR legal judgements issued after 15 March 2022. On 16 March 2022, Russia was evicted from the Council of Europe as a consequence of the 24 February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.¹¹⁸

On 17 December 2024 – in protest against disputed parliamentary and presidential elections on 26 October and 14 December 2024, respectively, which brought pro-Russian politicians to power – a march of dozens of historians took place from Republic Square to the parliament in the capital Tbilisi. They held placards that read: “We demand new parliamentary elections!” and “Freedom for the regime’s prisoners!” Various groups (social workers, technology professionals, doctors, HR professionals, lawyers) organized similar marches.¹¹⁹

GERMANY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1997–2000, 2003, 2006–2013, 2015–2017, 2019–2024.

On 20 September 2023, the #metoohistory initiative, founded in August 2023, organized a panel at the 54th Historikertage (Historians’ Days) of the Verband der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands (VHD; Association of Historians of Germany) about abuse of power in the historical sciences such as sexual harassment, verbal harassment, bullying, and discrimination. This followed the involvement of two historians from the history department of Humboldt-Universität in Berlin in such cases in July

¹¹⁸ European Court of Human Rights (Grand Chamber), *Case of Georgia v. Russia (II)* (Application no. 38263/08): [Judgment \(Merits\)](#) (21 January 2021) and [Judgment \(Just Satisfaction\)](#) (28 April 2023); Tamar Oniani, “[Georgia 2008 War: When Russia Won’t Pay Victims, Solutions Still Exist](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (1 August 2024).

¹¹⁹ “[Historians Are Marching in Tbilisi](#),” *OC Media* (17 December 2024).

2023. A panel about “Undoing Patriarchy in the Historical Sciences” organized by the Swiss Network of Female Historians at the 7th Schweizerische Geschichtstage (Swiss History Days), meeting in Luzern on 11 July 2025, confirmed the existence of a pervasive problem.¹²⁰

In June 2024, Peter Schöttler (1950–), a historian specialized in the history of Jewish intellectuals and the French *Annales* school, was accused of antisemitism in the newspaper *Bild Zeitung*, including by director Remko Leemhuis of the American Jewish Committee who demanded that “all institutions in which he (Schöttler) still has a function should end their cooperation immediately.” On 6 June 2024, Schöttler had retweeted a 5 June 2024 post comparing the Brandenburg Gate draped in swastikas and the same gate illuminated with the Israeli flag, using Karl Marx’s 1852 quote “History repeats itself, first as a tragedy, second as a farce.” To this retweeted post, he had added “That’s what I call funny.” After the backlash, he deleted the tweet and apologized to “everyone who was shocked,” adding that his retweet was meant ironically.

In mid-July 2024, the Freie Universität Berlin (Free University Berlin) dismissed Schöttler as an honorary professor from the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut at which he had worked (without salary) for 25 years without warning or explanation. The dismissal became official on 8 August 2024 but Schöttler was only informed about it by the university on 23 October 2024 and by the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut on 10 November 2024.¹²¹

On 7 November 2024, parliament adopted a resolution which established that the working definition on antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) should be used by all legislators to address any perceived deficits with regard to tackling antisemitism. The definition would form a benchmark against which various laws, such as criminal and asylum laws, should be reviewed and state funding allocated. Civil society groups and legal scholars, however, found the IHRA definition to be incompatible with international standards on freedom of expression. They feared that the resolution created legal uncertainty and would lead to violations of freedom of expression, academic freedom and artistic freedom.¹²²

¹²⁰ “[Metoohistory: Diskussionsveranstaltung zu Machtmissbrauch im deutschen Wissenschaftssystem](#)” (20 September 2023); “[Machtmissbrauch in der Wissenschaft & Metoohistory](#)” (30 September 2023); “[Interview mit den Initiatorinnen von #metoohistory](#),” *Traverse* (29 November 2025); “[\(Un\)sichtbarkeit / \(In\)visibilität: 7. Schweizerische Geschichtstage](#)” (program) (July 2025), 99–100.

¹²¹ Peter Schöttler, personal communication (20 & 23 & 25 November 2024); [Website Peter Schöttler: Pour Peter Schöttler / Für Peter Schöttler](#) (letter to the President of the Free University of Berlin; 1 December 2024); IM, “[An Universitäten in Berlin häufen sich entsprechende Skandale](#),” *Jüdische Allgemeine* (11 June 2024).

¹²² Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 179; Jefferson Chase, “[Germany Adopts Anti-Semitism Definition](#),” *DW* (20 September 2017).

On 1 December 2024, the University of Leipzig (UL) canceled a previously approved lecture by Benny Morris, emeritus professor of history at Ben Gurion University, Israel. The lecture, titled “The 1948 War and Jihad,” was scheduled for 5 December as part of a series on antisemitism. Leading up to the event, multiple university groups, including Students for Palestine Leipzig, had called for the lecture to be canceled, arguing that Morris has expressed racist views in comments made in a 2004 interview (during the second intifada), in which he stated that “in certain conditions, expulsion is not a war crime ... When the choice is between destroying or being destroyed, it’s better to destroy ... when the choice is between ethnic cleansing and genocide — the annihilation of your people — I prefer ethnic cleansing” and called for “something like a cage has to be built for” the Palestinians. The UL pointed to security reasons and to concerns over Morris’s views.¹²³

In [July] 2025, the University of Bremen canceled an event featuring psychoanalyst Iris Hefets on its premises, saying that the organization she belonged to, Jewish Voice for Just Peace in the Middle East (founded in 2003), had been “reliably assessed as extremist” by the Verfassungsschutz (VS; Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution). The VS called the organization “pro-Palestinian and extremist” because of its support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and its critique of Israel, which was viewed as hostile to Israel and antisemitic as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). A specialist on trauma research and Holocaust remembrance, Hefets was to give a lecture on “Schweigen und Schuld: Psychologische Mechanismen im Umgang mit dem Genozid in Gaza” (Silence and Guilt: Psychological Mechanisms in Dealing with the Genocide in Gaza). The Evangelical Zionskirche church organized an alternative venue for the lecture.¹²⁴

See also Chile, France, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, United Nations/International, United States.

GHANA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002, 2004–2008, 2017, 2019, 2022.

¹²³ Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project, “[Benny Morris](#)” ([2] December 2024); “[German University Cancels Lecture by Israeli Historian Benny Morris Due to Student Protests, ‘Security Concerns’](#),” *Allgemeiner* (2 December 2025).

¹²⁴ Michael Gardner, “[Bremen University Cancels Renowned Jewish Researcher](#),” *University World News* (7 July 2025).

GREECE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1999, 2004–2011, 2013–2019, 2022–2024.

In the first half of March 2025, the Sub-Directorate for the Suppression of Organized Crime of Northern Greece arrested 23 individuals, allegedly part of three antiquities smuggling rings. The case file detailed illegal archaeological searches (including at Kasta Tomb, near Amphipolis), embezzlement, and the illegal export of ancient objects. An archivist employed at the Ephorate of Antiquities of Serres was reportedly one of the ring leaders. The operation led to the seizure of ancient coins, artifacts, explosives, and cash [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*].¹²⁵

On 10 March 2025, Nikolaos Papadopoulos, member of parliament for the far-right Δημοκρατικό Πατριωτικό Λαϊκό Κίνημα «Νίκη» (Democratic Patriotic Popular Movement “Niki” [“Victory”]), vandalized several artworks in the Greek National Gallery in Athens, because he thought that they insulted Christianity. He had previously sent a letter of protest to the gallery and submitted questions to parliament in which he criticized the exhibition for “directly insulting the holy figures of the Virgin Mary and Christ.” On X he accused the Ministry of Culture of “blasphemy” for not canceling the exhibition.¹²⁶

See also Tunisia, Türkiye.

GRENADA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007, 2022.

GUATEMALA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–2023.

On 30 May 2025, the Guatemalan Court for High Risk Crimes in Guatemala City found three former paramilitaries guilty of raping six Maya Achi Indigenous women between 1981 and 1983 and sentenced

¹²⁵ “[Archivist Working for Greek Authorities Suspected as Archaeology Smuggling Ring Kingpin](#),” *Jerusalem Post* (16 March 2025).

¹²⁶ Eleni Stamatoukou, “[Greek Far-Right MP Vandalizes ‘Blasphemous’ Exhibit at National Gallery](#),” *Balkan Insight* (10 March 2025).

them to forty years in prison. The trial was part of a broader investigation into sexual violence of military personnel and paramilitary groups against Maya Achi women during the civil war (1960–1996). The first trial, in January 2022, had sentenced five former paramilitaries to thirty years in prison.¹²⁷

GUINEA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007, 2009–2024.

On 31 July 2024, the Dixinn criminal court sentenced former President Moussa Dadis Camara (in office between 2008–2010) to twenty years in prison and six others to between ten years and life imprisonment, for crimes against humanity committed during the 2009 Conakry Stadium massacre [See NCH *Annual Reports 2015–2016, 2018–2024*]. Four others were acquitted. The ruling was hailed by the International Criminal Court as a “landmark moment in establishing the truth ... and bringing to account those bearing the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed.” However, on 28 March 2025, the military junta issued a pardon for Camara on health grounds.

Initially, the Dixinn criminal court also stipulated that the convicts pay financial compensation of between 200 million to 1.5 billion Guinean francs (approximately US\$ 23,000 to US\$ 172,500) to all victims of rape or torture, and to the relatives of everyone who was killed or disappeared. The latter verdict was criticized for assigning responsibility for compensation to those convicted, instead of the State. Then, on 26 March 2025, a representative of the military junta pledged that the government would pay the reparations, driven by “a concern for social justice, national reconciliation, and compensation for harm.” Some, including the website Justice Info, saw the pledge for reparations by the government and the subsequent pardoning of Camara as part of a political deal.¹²⁸

On 17 September 2024, Claude Pivi, a former minister for Presidential Security, was arrested near the Liberian-Guinean border by Liberian police. Pivi, who had escaped from Conakry’s central prison in November 2023 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*], had been convicted in absentia on charges of crimes against humanity in July 2024. He was returned to Conakry’s central prison to serve his sentence.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ “Guatemala Jails Ex-Paramilitaries for 40 Years over Rapes During Civil War,” *Al Jazeera* (31 May 2025).

¹²⁸ Matthias Raynal, “Guinea: Dadis Camara Convicted, Trial Closes Leaving Questions,” *Justiceinfo.net* (2 August 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 200–201; Abdourahmane Bah, “Guinea: The State Commits to Compensating Victims,” *Justiceinfo.net* (27 March 2025); “Guinea: Reparations for a Pardon,” *Justiceinfo.net* (29 March 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 33, 188.

¹²⁹ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 200–201.

GUINEA-BISSAU

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2012, 2015.

GUYANA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 2022.

In [November] 2024, Neville Bissember, a law professor at the University of Guyana, published a letter to the government criticizing its plan to turn the site of the 1978 Jonestown massacre – in which, in the remote settlement of Jonestown established by the United States religious movement Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ, 909 people committed suicide following orders of cult leader Jim Jones – into a tourist site, calling it a “ghoulish and bizarre idea” that had had “nothing to do with Guyana nor Guyanese.” The idea of a tour, organized by the private operator Wonderlust Adventures whose director likened Jonestown to the Auschwitz–Birkenau memorial and museum in Oświęcim, Poland, retained strong support from the Tourism Authority and Tourism and Hospitality Association.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Associated Press, “[Concern as Guyana Considers Opening Jonestown Massacre Site to Tourism](#),” *Guardian* (9 December 2024).

HAITI

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 2000–2003, 2006, 2008–2009, 2013–2023.

On 17 April 2025, French President Emmanuel Macron announced the creation of a Franco-Haitian commission to examine the countries' shared history and "propose recommendations to both governments to draw lessons from it and build a more peaceful future." The announcement followed several calls on the French government to repay the harsh reparations that had been imposed in 1825 to compensate French slave-owning colonists after the 1804 Haitian independence. In April 2024, a group of twenty non-governmental organizations at the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent called for an independent commission to investigate and oversee restitution. Following Macron's announcement, the President of the Haitian National Committee on Restitution and Reparations (HNCRR) expressed skepticism over the commission calling it "a delaying move that buys time and allows for a wait-and-see approach." A 2021 *New York Times* investigation estimated that Haiti's economic loss between 1825 and 1947 (when it made its last reparations payment) amounted to US\$ 21 billion, but various organizations and historians including the HNCRR estimated that it could be as high as between US\$ 135 billion to US\$ 200 billion.¹³¹

HONDURAS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1998, 2001–2002, 2009–2015, 2022–2023.

HONG KONG

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996. From 1997: *See China*.

¹³¹ "[France Urged to Repay Billions of Dollars to Haiti for Independence 'Ransom'](#)," *Guardian* (18 April 2024); "[Macron Announces Creation of Joint Commission to Examine Haiti's Independence Debt to France](#)," *Le Monde* (17 April 2025); Natricia Duncan, "[Macron Announces Joint Commission with Haiti amid Calls for Reparations](#)," *Guardian* (17 April 2025).

HUNGARY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1997, 2004, 2007–2024.

After his election as mayor of the twelfth district of Budapest, Gergely Kovács proceeded to remove the Turul monument, which officially commemorated soldiers killed during World War II but included several members of the Fascist and antisemitic Arrow Cross party that collaborated with the Nazis [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. The controversy over the monument, which was created in 2004, had previously resulted in a 2009 lawsuit in which the court had confirmed that the statue could be removed – a decision blocked by the city council (dominated by a majority belonging to the ruling Fidesz party) at the time. Following Kovács’s decision, the minister of construction and transportation János Lázár – who had previously expressed his admiration for the former regent and Nazi collaborator Miklós Horthy (in power between 1920–1944) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] – placed the monument under historical monument protection.¹³²

See also Kazakhstan, United States.

¹³² Márton Losonczi, “[Progressive Statue Removal Trend Comes to Hungary: The Case of the Turul Monument in Budapest’s 12th District](#),” *Hungarian Conservative* (18 June 2024); Márton Losonczi, “[Turul Statue Controversy Resolved: Taking the Wind Out of the Opposition’s Sails](#),” *Hungarian Conservative* (25 October 2024).

INDIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–1997, 2000–2024.

After the cancelation of a lecture by political scientist and former head of the University of Delhi political science department, Achin Vanaik, on the Palestine/Israel conflict at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) in November 2023 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*], the IIT Bombay issued guidelines prohibiting students and faculty from organizing events or guest lectures that “may be viewed as political” without the permission of the administration. In the lead-up to the IIT’s February 2024 annual National Environment Conference, it disinvited environmentalist, historian, and critic of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Ramachandra Guha.¹³³

On 1 July 2024, three new laws – Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita – came into force. They replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860; the Indian Evidence Act, 1872; and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1882, respectively. Claimed to overhaul colonial-era laws, the new laws retained problematic provisions including sedition.¹³⁴

On 3 September 2024, streaming service Netflix added a disclaimer to its fictional series “IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack” after criticism from social media users and politicians from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The series, inspired by the 1999 hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 by members of the Pakistan-based Islamist Jihadist group Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, included scenes in which the hijackers referred to themselves using Hindu aliases. The BJP spokesperson for information technology and social media criticized the series for legitimizing “criminal intent” and warned that “decades later, people will think Hindus hijacked IC-814.” The disclaimer included the aliases and real names of the hijackers and added that the series “does not make any claims of authenticity or historical correctness.”¹³⁵

On 10 October 2024, the Committee of Courses of Delhi University proposed changes to the Indian history course “Delhi through the Ages: The Making of Its Early Modern History.” The proposal included the removal of historian Irfan Habib’s influential “Economic History of the Delhi Sultanate – An Essay in Interpretation,” on the economic configurations of Medieval Delhi. Habib was an influential critic of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

¹³³ Os Tyagi, “[Recent Developments in the Crisis of Academic Freedom in India](#),” *Endangered Scholars Worldwide* (19 November 2024).

¹³⁴ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 194.

¹³⁵ John Yoon & Suhasini Raj, “[Netflix Adds Disclaimer to Indian Show after Anger over Hijacker Names](#),” *New York Times* (4 September 2024).

The proposal further suggested to replace Purana Qila – a sixteenth-century fort built by the Mughal Emperor Nasir al-Din Muhammad (also known as Humayun; 1508–1566) and Surid Sultan Sher Shah Suri (also known as Sultan Adil; [1472/1486]–1545) – with “Indraprastha-Hastinapur,” referring to a fringe archaeological theory that suggested that Purana Qila was the site of the city of Indraprastha, the capital of Pandavas in the Sanskrit epic *Mahābhārata*. The proposed change was criticized by historian Maya John as “not based on academic merit,” but intended to align the syllabus with “the agenda of the ruling dispensation.”¹³⁶

On 5 November 2024, the Delhi High Court ruled that the 1988 ban on the historical novel *The Satanic Verses* (1988), written by novelist and historian Salman Rushdie (1947–), should be lifted and the book be freely imported. After a petition had been filed against the ban in 2019, the court had asked for the notification that banned the import of the book at the time but no such notification was found. The novel was a magical-realistic tale inspired by a small group of pagan verses (“the satanic verses”) temporarily included in the Quran by Muhammad. It was considered blasphemous and sparked protests, a fatwa (religious edict), and death threats against Rushdie [NCH *Annual Reports* 1996, 1998–1999, 2013, 2022–2023].¹³⁷

On 5 November 2024, the board of Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), dismissed history professor Salil Mishra and human ecology professor Asmita Kabra. Serving in administrative roles as pro-vice-chancellor and acting registrar in 2018, they had attempted to regularize the positions of 38 non-teaching staff following long-standing staff demands through a “one-time absorption policy.” The dismissals were effectuated as part of a disciplinary action “due to their involvement in irregularities, including unauthorized appointments” despite the findings of two inquiry committees that found no evidence of corruption or financial misconduct and despite massive protests from staff and students. On 14 November, the Indian History Congress Executive Committee adopted a resolution condemning the dismissals, saying that they were not for any personal misconduct but for implementing an AUD decision that was regular at the time but that had been reversed in 2020.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Ashna Butani, “[DU Panel Proposes Changes to Paper on Delhi’s History](#),” *The Hindu* (10 October 2024); Os Tyagi, “[Recent Developments in the Crisis of Academic Freedom in India](#),” *Endangered Scholars Worldwide* (19 November 2024).

¹³⁷ “[Indian Court Overrules Ban on Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses – Because of a Missing File](#),” *Euronews* (7 November 2024).

¹³⁸ “[Ambedkar University Delhi Dismisses 2 Faculty Members for ‘Involvement in Irregularities’](#),” *Indian Express* (10 November 2024); “[Students’ Body Protest Termination of Profs at Ambedkar University](#),” *The Tribune* (12 November 2024); Indian History Congress, [Resolution](#) (14 November 2024); “[Teachers, Students Protest Termination of Ambedkar University Professors Salil Mishra, Asmita Kabra](#),” *Maktoob* (18 November 2024).

On 20 January 2025, a court in Delhi ordered the seizure of two “offensive” paintings by M.F. [Maqbool Fida] Husain [Hussain] (1915–2011), “the Picasso of India,” after a complaint was filed alleging that the paintings, displayed at the Delhi Art Gallery (DAG) and featuring Hindu deities Ganesha and Hanuman alongside nude female figures, “hurt religious sentiments.” This was not the first time that M.F. Husain’s work was the target of legal complaints for “outraging religious sentiments” and “disturbing national integrity.”

In 2006 in Maharashtra, the radical Hindu nationalist political party Shiv Sena (a right-wing Marathi regional political party) had attacked him for his painting of Bharat Mata (Mother India) as a nude woman posing across a map of India with the names of Indian States on various parts of her body. The painting had appeared in the 6 February 2006 issue of the national English weekly *India Today*. Husain had maintained that the painting was untitled when he had originally sold it in 2004, and that other people gave it the title. In judging the case, the Delhi High Court had declared: “It is most unfortunate that India’s new ‘puritanism’ is being carried out in the name of cultural purity ... and a host of ignorant people are vandalizing art and pushing us toward a pre-Renaissance era.” In 2008, the Supreme Court eventually refused to launch criminal proceedings against him, arguing that his work was not obscene and that nudity was common in Indian iconography. Husain went into self-imposed exile in Doha, Qatar, and died in London.¹³⁹

Around 21 March 2025, a so-called Public Interest Litigation (PIL; a petition) – filed in the Bombay High Court by Ketan Tirodkar, an activist from Shiv Sena (a right-wing Marathi regional political party) – sought the demolition of the tomb of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1618–1707) as well as those of his two sons in Khuldabad, Maharashtra, arguing that they should not hold the protected status of national monument as they did not align with the definition of “national importance” under the Archaeological Survey of India Act of 1958 [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*].¹⁴⁰

On or around 28 April 2025, in its latest revision, the National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) reportedly dropped all references to the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526) and Mughal Empire (1526–1857) from its Class 7 social science textbook “Exploring Society: India and Beyond” and added a chapter on dynasties that reflected the “Indian ethos” and references to the Maha Kumbh,

¹³⁹ Nikita Yadav, “[India Court Orders Seizure of ‘Offensive’ MF Husain Paintings](#),” *BBC News* (22 January 2025); *Index on Censorship*, 2011 no. 3, 105, 174; 2012, no. 4, 144; 2013, no. 2, 21–22; “[Religion and Free Speech: It’s Complicated](#)” (*Index on Censorship*, 22 November 2012); Meena Vari, “[Creative and Academic Freedom under Threat from Religious Intolerance in India](#),” *The Conversation* (1 July 2015); PEN & International Human Rights Program, *Imposing Silence: The Use of India’s Laws to Suppress Free Speech* (Toronto & London: PEN, 2015), 19.

¹⁴⁰ Vidya & Meghna Barik, “[Plea in Bombay High Court Seeks Demolition of Aurangzeb’s Tomb](#),” *India Today* (21 March 2025); “[Remove Aurangzeb’s Tomb from the List of Protected Monuments: Shiv Sena](#),” *The Hindu* (28 March 2025).

a Hindu festival. The changes were in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023, outlining textbook policies of so-called “syllabus rationalization” and incorporation of Indian traditional knowledge [See NCH *Annual Reports 2020, 2022–2023*]. The policies met with criticism from opposition parties which termed the revamp as “saffronization” to suit the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party’s agenda.¹⁴¹

On 18 May 2025, historian Ali Khan Mahmudabad (1982–), an associate professor and head of the Political Science Department at Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana, was arrested for allegedly making disparaging remarks in Facebook posts on 8 and 11 May 2025 against two senior women officers serving in the armed forces during Operation Sindoor (India’s May 2025 military campaign targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir). The arrest followed two complaints filed by Haryana State Women’s Commission chairperson Renu Bhatia and Yogesh Jathedi, a leader of the Yuva Morcha, the youth wing of the Bharatiya Janata Party, who respectively alleged that Mahmudabad’s post had endangered the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India and promoted communal disharmony. Mahmudabad said that his remarks were misrepresented and that he had merely called for restraint in the conflict, referring to instances of bulldozing of houses and mob lynching and denouncing the “blind bloodlust for war” displayed by certain netizens. Ashoka University distanced itself from Mahmudabad. An open letter signed by over 1,200 people expressed support for him. On 21 May 2025, the Supreme Court of India granted interim bail to Mahmudabad but restrained him from further commenting on the armed conflict. A three-member Special Investigation Team was set-up to investigate the meaning of Mahmudabad’s posts.¹⁴²

A July 2025 *Index on Censorship* report signaled that many digital newspaper archives had disappeared across India, especially in Indian-administered Kashmir and Jammu following the government’s 2019 abrogation of Article 370, which had revoked the region’s special status. Media outlets allegedly erased or hid their work amid what they described as growing pressure from the government to limit reporting critical of its policies, in particular stories about surveillance, hate crimes, and human rights violations.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ [“NCERT Drops All Portions on Mughals, Delhi Sultanate from Class 7 Books, Adds Maha Kumbh,”](#) *Hindustan Times* (28 April 2025).

¹⁴² [“Over 1200 Call on Haryana Women’s Panel to Retract Summons against Political Scientist Ali Khan Mahmudabad,”](#) *Maktoob Media* (17 May 2025); [“Ali Khan Mahmudabad Arrested: Controversy on Ashoka University Professor Explained,”](#) *Hindustan Times* (18 May 2025); Supreme Court of India, [Ali Khan Mahmudabad versus State of Haryana: Order](#) (21 May 2025); Aaratrika Bhaumik, [“Why Supreme Court’s Order in Mahmudabad’s Case Signals a Shift in Free Speech Jurisprudence,”](#) *The Hindu* (26 May 2025); [“Ali Khan Mahmudabad,”](#) *Wikipedia* (retrieved 4 June 2025).

¹⁴³ Hanan Zaffar, [“News in India Is Being Erased from the Internet,”](#) *Index on Censorship* (23 Jul 2025).

INDONESIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998, 2001–2002, 2004–2013, 2015–2019, 2021–2024.

In December 2024, the government commissioned 120 historians and archaeologists to publish an official ten-volume history of Indonesia spanning from homo erectus to the election of President Prabowo Subianto (1951–; in office from October 2024). The historians and archaeologists were united in an Indonesian History Rewriting Team chaired by historian Susanto Zuhdi (1953–) and expected to deliver the work in time for Independence Day on 15 August 2025. The official history was intended to serve as the primary reference for history textbooks across all educational levels.

A 30-page draft outline of the history books, circulating in limited circles, included only two out of twelve cases of gross human rights violations identified by the official National Commission on Human Rights (established in 1993) to have taken place after decolonization in 1945, omitting some in which Prabowo himself had been implicated [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2009, 2024]. Calling the outline propaganda, critics feared that the project would whitewash Indonesian history and show Prabowo and the late authoritarian ruler Suharto (1921–2008; in office 1967–1998) in a favorable light, thus legitimizing their terms of office. Some pointed to the parallel with the six-volume book series titled “The National History of Indonesia,” that had been released during Suharto’s reign in 1975 and glorified the military.

In particular, some fifty historians, legal experts, authors, and intellectuals, united in the civil coalition Aliansi Keterbukaan Sejarah Indonesia (AKSI; Indonesian Historical Transparency Alliance), led by human rights lawyer and former Attorney General Marzuki Darusman, expressed concerns about the omission or distortion of the following historical topics: the era of first President Sukarno (1901–1970; in office 1945–1967); the Bandung conference of non-aligned countries in 1955; the mass killings of communists in 1965–1966, led by military and Islamic leaders; the description of Suharto’s New Order era (1967–1998); the forced disappearance and torture of pro-democracy activists and the mass rape of dozens of Chinese-Indonesian women during riots in May 1998 and Prabowo’s role in it; and the war crimes committed by Indonesian forces in East Timor (1975–1999).

On 19 May 2025, AKSI representatives gathered at the House of Representatives in Jakarta and presented a five-point manifesto in House Commission X (overseeing education and culture), demanding that the lawmakers reject the government’s rewriting of history. House Commission X chair Hetifah Sjaifudian sympathized with AKSI’s concerns over the project’s lack of transparency, admitting that the commission had not been properly consulted by the Culture Ministry and promising to urge the removal of the “official” label from the history books to preserve space for open historical discourse.

In response, Minister of Culture Fadli Zon declared that he wanted to hold a public consultation on the manuscript in either June or July 2025.¹⁴⁴

On 13 and 14 June 2025, historian and activist Ita Fatia Nadia, reportedly received numerous anonymous threats after she had protested remarks by Minister of Culture Fadli Zon that the mass rape of dozens of Chinese-Indonesian women during riots in May 1998 was only a rumor. At the time, Ita had been a member of the Joint Fact-Finding Team which in July 1998, after Suharto's resignation, had investigated and confirmed the crimes. President Prabowo Subianto (1951–; in office from October 2024), commander of the Kopassus special forces at the time of the crimes, had been discharged from the military because of his alleged involvement in the kidnapping and torture of 22 pro-democracy activists, 13 of whom were still missing, in response to the riots.¹⁴⁵

See also Australia, Netherlands, Singapore.

IRAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–2024.

Throughout 2024, authorities prevented Baha'i burials in a cemetery used by Baha'is for decades. In March 2024, authorities destroyed more than thirty Baha'i graves in the Khavaran mass gravesite. In August, authorities failed to investigate after a Baha'i cemetery in Ahvaz, Khuzestan province, was vandalized [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*].¹⁴⁶

On 3 January 2024, a bomb attack in Kerman killed 84 people at a memorial ceremony for Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps General Qassem Soleimani (1957–2020). Islamic State in Iraq and the

¹⁴⁴ “[Manifesto Aliansi Keterbukaan Sejarah Indonesia \(AKSI\)](#),” *Amnesty International Indonesia* (19 May 2025); “[AKSI: Tolak Proyek Penulisan ‘Sejarah Resmi’ Indonesia](#),” *Amnesty International Indonesia* (AKSI press release; 19 May 2025); Ananda Teresia & Gayatri Suroyo, “[In Indonesia, Fears Grow that Dark Past May Be Rewritten with Government’s New History Books](#),” *Reuters* (19 May 2025); Tenggara Strategics, “[Analysis: Prabowo Regime Rewriting National ‘His-story’](#),” *Jakarta Post* (19 May 2025); Radhiyya Indra, “[Civil Coalition Rejects Indonesian Government’s Rewriting of History Project](#),” *Asia News* (21 May 2025); AKSI, “[Support a Transparent, Honest and Just Writing of Indonesian History](#),” *Asia Pacific Solidarity Network* (petition; 2 June 2025); “[Tolak proyek penulisan ‘Sejarah resmi’ Indonesia!](#),” *Amnesty International Indonesia* (petition; s.d. [2 June] 2025); Daniel Ahmad Fajri, “[Civil Society Launches Petition against Government’s Rewrite of Indonesian History](#),” *Tempo* (2 June 2025); Kafil Yamin, “[Academics Wary about ‘Official’ Rewrite of Nation’s History](#),” *University World News* (26 June 2025).

¹⁴⁵ Radhiyya Indra, “[Female Activist Threatened after Protesting Minister’s Denial of 1998 Mass Rape](#),” *Jakarta Post* (19 June 2025).

¹⁴⁶ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 204.

Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) claimed responsibility for the attack. After the attack, security forces arrested several students and professors who criticized Soleimani and the government's failure to provide safety for its citizens.¹⁴⁷

In March 2024, the Shiraz Revolutionary Court sentenced historian Mehrzad Mousavi to eleven years in prison for "collusion," "propaganda" and "membership in anti-regime groups," and to two years' exile to Kerman Province after his release. The court also confiscated his passport and issued a travel ban. As of March 2025, his physical health had seriously declined.¹⁴⁸

In March and August 2024, authorities prevented victims' families from accessing the Khavaran mass gravesite, which was believed to contain the remains of some of the several thousand political dissidents forcibly disappeared and extrajudicially executed in 1988 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2008–2009, 2017, 2021–2024*]. Some of the officials involved in the 1988 prison massacres continued to hold high official positions. One of them, President Ebrahim Raisi (in office between 2021–2024) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2017, 2021*], died in a helicopter crash on 19 May 2024. On 18 January 2025, two others, Judges Mohammad Moghiseh and Ali Razini, were assassinated in Tehran.¹⁴⁹

In the lead-up to the second anniversary of the 16 September 2022 murder of law student Mahsa (Zhin) Amini (1999–2022) by members of the morality police and the ensuing Woman, Life, Freedom protests that were violently suppressed by security forces leading to the deaths of at least five hundred people, security forces exerted pressure on relatives of victims, including through arrest and surveillance, and prohibited commemorative events [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*]. On 16 September 2024, Amini's parents were placed under house arrest in Saqqez, with security forces deployed throughout the city and blocking the ways to the cemetery where Amini was buried. Many businesses in Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan closed in the lead-up to 16 September.

Security forces also increased pressure on families calling for accountability and justice for people killed during the Woman, Life, Freedom protests. On 27 August 2024, the Special Court for Minors in Razavi Khorasan sentenced 15-year-old Faramarz Abil Barahoui to eight months in prison. On 4 August 2023, Barahoui had been arrested while he was visiting the grave of his older brother Ismail Abil

¹⁴⁷ "[University Crackdown: New Wave of Student, Academic Arrests in Iran](#)," *Iran Wire* (11 January 2024); Scholars at Risk, [Free to Think 2024: Report of the Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project](#) (New York: SAR, 2024).

¹⁴⁸ "[Report on the Latest Status of Writer Mehrzad Mousavi in Adelabad Prison](#)," *HRANA* (27 June 2024); Writers at Risk Database, "[Mehrzad Mousavi](#)," *PEN America* (ongoing project).

¹⁴⁹ Maryam Sinaiee, "[Who Were the Supreme Court Judges Assassinated in Iran?](#)," *Iran International* (18 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 205.

Barahoui who was killed during the 30 September 2022 Zahedan massacre (also known as “Bloody Friday”) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].¹⁵⁰

See also Argentina, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye.

IRAQ

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2000–2024.

On 3 August 2024, marking the day when fighters of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL; also known as Da’esh) first entered Sinjar province in 2014, people across Iraq gathered to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Yazidi genocide in which between 2014–2017 at least 5,000 Yazidis were killed and close to 11,000 women and girls sold into sexual slavery. The directorate of Yazidi affairs in the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs estimated that approximately 360,000 Yazidis, of a pre-2014 community of 550,000, were displaced, of which around 150,000 continued to live in internally displaced people (IDP) camps in Iraqi Kurdistan. More than 2,000 people had disappeared, the remains of 243 of which had been recovered. The fate of the others remained unknown. In March 2021, parliament had adopted the Yazidi Survivor Law (YSL), which recognized the crimes committed against the Yazidi, Shabak, Christian, and Turkmen communities by Da’esh as genocide and crimes against humanity and provided a range of benefits to victims of sexual violence, sexual slavery, and forced pregnancy, as well as to children who were kidnapped, and those who survived the massacres. However, shortly after the YSL was passed, a heavy evidential burden was imposed on survivors and many awarded reparations had not been paid as of August 2024. Moreover, various articles of the law, including the search for the missing and guarantees to the right of education, had not been implemented.¹⁵¹

On 17 September 2024, the government terminated the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/ISIL (UNITAD) mission to exhume mass graves related to the Yazidi genocide, despite the fact that less than 700 of the estimated minimum of 5,000

¹⁵⁰ “[Iran Continues Arrests Ahead of Mahsa Amini’s Death Anniversary](#),” *IranWire* (9 September 2024); “[Iran: Arrests of Family Members of Protesters](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (10 September 2024); Alex McDonald & Anonymous Correspondent, “[Mahsa Amini’s Family under House Arrest in Iran on Second Anniversary of Death](#),” *Middle East Eye* (16 September 2024); “[Iran: 2 Years on From Woman’s Death, No Change](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (16 September 2024).

¹⁵¹ Luke Moffett, “[Ten Years on from the Yazidi Genocide: Searching for Redress for the War against ISIS](#),” *International Center for Counter-Terrorism* (31 July 2024); Marta Bellingreri, “[Iraq’s Yazidis Gather to Remember the Dead and Missing, 10 Years on from Islamic State Genocide](#),” *Guardian* (3 August 2024).

Yazidi's that were killed between 2014–2017 had been exhumed and that at least 32 identified mass graves had not yet been exhumed.

In 2017, after the liberation of areas held by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL; also known as Da'esh), the government had requested the UN Security Council to set up UNITAD. Its work, led by local forensic teams, was complicated by the existence of mass and unmarked graves from various periods of violence, including the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988), the United States invasion (2003–2011) and the Civil War (2006–2008), and the massacres committed during the reign of Saddam Hussein (in power as president between 1979–2003). Government officials complained that UNITAD refused to hand over evidence, despite sharing it with other countries prosecuting ISIL fighters. The United Nations (UN) opposed capital punishment, while the government had previously sentenced ISIL fighters to death, but UNITAD officials indicated that they had shared some evidence with the authorities. The government's decision to upend the mission was seen as part of a wider policy to terminate programs that had been initiated after 2017 and to sentence ISIL perpetrators to death. Critics suggested that this was partly due to external pressure on the government, allegedly including from Iran.¹⁵²

See also Iran, Saudi Arabia, United States.

IRELAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2013, 2015–2016, 2021, 2023.

On 30 May 2025, the Dublin High Court found that the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) had not acted in a “fair and reasonable” way in its portrayal of former Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams in its 2016 documentary and online article *Spotlight*, and awarded Adams € 100,000 in compensation. The BBC investigation included an anonymous allegation that the 2005 killing of Irish Republican Army (IRA) member and Sinn Fein official-turned British intelligence informant Denis Donaldson had been sanctioned by Adams. Adams, who had led Sinn Fein between 1983–2018 and dismissed ever having been involved with the IRA, denied any relation to the killing. The BBC argued that it had acted in “good faith,” that the investigation and documentary had been in the public interest, and that the allegations were corroborated by five additional sources.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Eve Sampson, “[Racing the Clock to Document ISIS Genocide of Iraq’s Yazidis](#),” *New York Times* (5 September 2024); Marta Bellingreri & Alessio Mamo, “[Uncovering Iraq’s Mass Graves: The Painstaking Search for Missing Loved Ones – Photo Essay](#),” *Guardian* (9 January 2025); Bojan Gavrilovic, “[Navigating the Accountability Maze in Post-UNITAD Iraq](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (17 January 2025).

¹⁵³ “[Ex-Sinn Fein Leader Gerry Adams Wins Libel Case Against the BBC](#),” *Al Jazeera* (30 May 2025).

See also United Kingdom.

ISRAEL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998, 2000–2003, 2008–2014, 2016–2024.

Throughout 2024, decades of impunity for recurrent war crimes and crimes against humanity against Palestinians continued. Authorities failed to investigate alleged human rights violations, including war crimes and genocide in Gaza, extrajudicial killings on the Occupied West Bank, and human rights violations, including torture, in prisons. Authorities also did not allow any independent investigators into Gaza. On 26 January, 28 March and 24 May 2024, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Israel to implement provisional measures to prevent genocide in Gaza. Israeli authorities repeatedly ignored such orders. On 19 July, the ICJ found that the occupation of Palestinian territory violated the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) prohibition against racial segregation and apartheid. In August 2024, the Israeli human rights organization B'tselem published *Welcome to Hell*, a report documenting “the widespread, systematic and prolonged commission of the crime of torture” of Palestinians in Israeli prisons since the 7 October 2023 attack on Israel. On 21 November, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, then defense minister Yoav Gallant, and the head of the Al-Qassam Brigades Mohammed Diab Ibrahim al-Masri (also known as Mohammed Deif; killed on 13 July 2024) on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) continued to be barred from entering Israel and the OPT. It received no response from the government to fifteen requests for information and reported that the government had told Israeli doctors not to cooperate with its investigation into alleged war crimes in southern Israel on 7 October 2023.¹⁵⁴

In June 2024, Israeli Holocaust scholar and historian at Brown University, United States, Omer Bartov [See NCH *Annual Report* 2024], resigned from the editorial board of Yad Vashem Studies, the journal

¹⁵⁴ B'tselem, [Welcome to Hell](#) (Jerusalem: B'tselem, August 2024); Amnesty International, [‘You Feel Like You Are Subhuman’: Israel’s Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza](#) (London: AI, December 2024); Human Rights Watch, [Extermination and Acts of Genocide: Israel Deliberately Depriving Palestinians in Gaza of Water](#) (New York: HRW, December 2024); Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, “[Extrajudicial Executions and Other Unlawful Use of Force in the Occupied West Bank](#),” (press release; 16 May 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 66, 215; “[Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem](#),” *International Court of Justice* ([ongoing]); “[Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip \(South Africa v. Israel\)](#),” *International Court of Justice* ([ongoing]).

attached to the Holocaust museum Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, where he had served for two decades, because it did not want to label the Gaza massacres as genocide. In December 2023, Bartov had criticized the Israeli government for invoking false memories of the Holocaust after the 7 October Hamas attacks on Israel. He stated that calling the attacks a “second Holocaust” and comparing Hamas to Nazis was a “propagandistic turn of phrase” and risked stoking antisemitism and Islamophobia.¹⁵⁵

On 26 August 2024, the communist party office in Haifa was closed for ten hours without court order to prevent screening of *Jenin Jenin 2*, a film by Palestinian-Israeli director Mohammed Bakri (1953–) on the grounds that showing it represented an immediate danger to public security. On 27 August 2024, police also ordered the director of a theater in Jaffa to drop plans to screen the film and the latter complied. The film, a sequel of Bakri’s first film, *Jenin, Jenin* (2002), about a bloody Israeli raid in the Jenin refugee camp, north of the occupied West Bank, documented Israel’s new incursion into the camp in 2023. It also contained segments from the first film, a section on Bakri’s legal and personal troubles as a result of the first movie [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021*], and an explanation of the plight of Palestinian refugees since their displacement in 1948.¹⁵⁶

In November 2024, the Culture and Sport Ministry’s Film Review Council warned cinemas not to screen filmmaker Neta Shoshani’s documentary film *1948: Remember, Remember Not*, as it had not been granted the council’s approval. The film looked at the events of 1948 – known by Palestinians as Nakba to describe the expulsion of about 750,000 Palestinians from Mandatory Palestine, and by Israeli Jews as the War of Independence to denote the establishment of the State of Israel – through testimonies and interviews with Israelis and Palestinians. The film lost several screenings as a result, but was ultimately approved by the council. The public broadcaster Kan (also known as the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation), which had funded the film, had not aired it for more than a year, due to what it described as wartime sensitivities.¹⁵⁷

In December [2024], Culture and Sport Minister Miki Zohar threatened to halt government funding for the Tel Aviv Cinematheque after it showed films deemed to be pro-Palestine at the Solidarity Human Rights Film Festival 2024. One of these films was the previously-censored *Lyd*, which depicted the 1948 expulsion (Nakba in Arabic) of that town’s Palestinians and imagined what *Lyd* would be like if

¹⁵⁵ Mari Cohen, “[Can Genocide Studies Survive a Genocide in Gaza?](#)” *Jewish Currents* (Fall/Winter 2024); Gulcin Kazan Doger, “[Israel Legitimizes Killing Gazans by Comparing Hamas to Nazis, Says Israeli Professor](#),” *Andalou Agency* (5 December 2023).

¹⁵⁶ Ben Lynfield, “[Israel’s Trajectory into a Nascent Police State](#),” *Index on Censorship* (5 September 2024).

¹⁵⁷ Ben Lynfield, “[‘In a Fascist Regime, Culture Becomes Propaganda’: Concerns over Growing Censorship in Israel](#),” *Index on Censorship* (19 February 2025).

not for the Nakba. Two months prior, the police had banned a screening of *Lyd* in Jaffa after Zohar had said the movie was “inciting and mendacious” and “slander[ed] Israel and Israeli soldiers.”¹⁵⁸

On 11 December 2024, the documentary *The Bibi Files*, by filmmakers Alex Gibney and Alexis Bloom and journalist Raviv Drucker, was released on Jolt.film. It contained footage about three separate corruption cases in which Benjamin Netanyahu (Prime Minister in 1996–1999, 2010–2021, and from 2022) and his family had been involved in the past and their influence on Israeli politics. The film could not be legally shown in Israel for privacy reasons, but many used a VPN to bypass streaming restrictions or watched pirate versions appearing on social media.¹⁵⁹

On 3 January 2025, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 wrote an allegations letter to the Israeli government concerning the destruction and damage to numerous cultural assets of Palestinians since October 2023, including historical and religious heritage sites, cultural institutions such as museums, cultural centers and venues, educational institutions and libraries, as well as attacks and reprisals against Palestinian artists, cultural workers and cultural rights defenders, which amounted to critical and irreversible destruction of the cultural life of the Palestinian people. In addition, the Rapporteurs alleged that the widespread destruction of Palestinian cultural assets contributed to erasing expressions of the Palestinian identity and collective memory, which they considered indicative of a broader genocidal intent.¹⁶⁰

On 11 March 2025, the Israel Police raided the Palestinian Educational Bookshop, specialized in books related to the history of the Palestine–Israel conflict and the history of Jerusalem, in East Jerusalem, briefly detaining one of its owners, Imad Muna ([1964–]), and closing the store without a warrant. They also confiscated some fifty books for a few hours, including *Palestinian Identity*, by historian Rashid Khalidi, and *Gaza in Crisis*, by historian Ilan Pappé and Noam Chomsky. At an earlier raid, on 9 February 2025, Israel police had arrested two other owners, Mahmoud and Ahmad Muna, and held them for 48 hours on charges of incitement and suspicion of disturbing public order.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Ben Lynfield, “[‘In a Fascist Regime, Culture Becomes Propaganda’: Concerns over Growing Censorship in Israel](#),” *Index on Censorship* (19 February 2025).

¹⁵⁹ Jocelyn Noveck, “[‘The Bibi Files,’ With Leaked Netanyahu Footage, Can’t Be Seen in Israel – Israelis Are Finding Ways](#),” *AP News* (13 December 2024).

¹⁶⁰ Mandates of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, [Allegations Letter AL ISR 24/2024](#) (3 January 2025).

¹⁶¹ Nir Hasson, “[‘They Took Every Book With a Palestinian Flag on It’: Israeli Police Raids Iconic E. J’lem Bookshop, Arrest Owners](#),” *Haaretz* (10 February 2025); Lucia Admiraal, “[Israëlische politie doet opnieuw inval in Palestijnse boekwinkel Oost-Jeruzalem](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (11 March 2025); Yael Freidson & Nir Hasson, “[Israel Police Raid Palestinian Bookshop in East Jerusalem for Second Time in a Month, Detain](#)

On 19 April 2025, the Palestinian government expressed “extreme concern” over threats circulating among Israeli settler organizations to destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem – the third-holiest site in Islam besides the Al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca and the Al-Masjid an-Nabawi in Medina. Hebrew social media platforms regularly featured reference to a once-fringe movement – known as the “Third Temple” – calling for the replacement of the Al-Aqsa Mosque by a Jewish temple in the tradition of Solomon’s Temple, whose historical existence is contested, and Herod’s Temple (built in 516 BCE and destroyed in 70 CE). In August 2024, Israel’s National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir had caused outrage after stating his intention to build a Jewish Synagogue at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.¹⁶²

On 13 May 2025, Education Minister Yoav Kisch threatened to revoke funding for Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University over student rallies commemorating the Nakba (an Arabic term for “catastrophe,” indicating the expulsion and exodus of some 750,000 Palestinians from Mandatory Palestine during Israel’s 1948 War of Independence leading to the establishment of the State of Israel). The revoking of funding would occur under the 2011 so-called Nakba Law, empowering Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to penalize institutions that fund activities marking Independence Day as a “day of mourning.” Both Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University stated that they supported their students’ right to mark the Nakba, and called Kisch’s threats illegal because applying the Nakba Law implied that Smotrich would have to prove that both universities had themselves funded their students’ Nakba commemorations. Right-wing student group Im Tirtzu held counter-demonstrations. Meanwhile, on Nakba Day itself (15 May 2025) the Israeli army killed at least 115 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip; due to the war and occupation, no Nakba commemorations could be held there [See NCH *Annual Reports 2003, 2008–2014, 2018, 2020, 2022–2024*].¹⁶³

See also Algeria, Argentina, Germany, India, Japan. Lebanon, Mexico, Palestine, Poland, South Africa, Tunisia, United States.

[Owner](#),” *Haaretz* (11 March 2025); Georgia Beeston, “[Mahmoud Muna: ‘There Is a Policy of Oppression towards Cultural Institutions](#),” *Index on Censorship* (23 April 2025).

¹⁶² “[Palestinian Government Denounces Settler Threat to Al-Aqsa Mosque](#),” Al Jazeera (19 April 2025); Rachel Fink, “[Explained: The Israeli Extremists Who Want to Rebuild the Temple, and the Government Ministers Who Back Them](#),” *Haaretz* (24 April 2024); “[King Solomon’s Tablet of Stone](#),” BBC News (17 September 2014).

¹⁶³ “[Education Minister Threatens Universities’ Funding over Student Nakba Events](#),” *Times of Israel* (13 May 2025); “[Ministers Threaten to Revoke Funding for Universities where Students Hold ‘Nakba’ Memorials](#),” *Times of Israel* (13 May 2025); Freyan Bosma, “[Op dag van wereldwijde Nakba-herdenkingen doodt Israël minstens 115 Palestijnen in Gaza](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (15 May 2025).

ITALY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2001, 2003, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2016–2019, 2021–2022, 2024.

On 5 July 2022, far-right politician Giorgia Meloni, then an opposition parliamentarian and leader of the Fratelli d'Italia (Brothers of Italy) political party (and from October 2022 Prime Minister), sued historian and philologist Luciano Canfora ([1942]–) for defamation. In April 2022, during a debate on Russia's invasion of Ukraine at a high school in Bari, Puglia, Canfora had called her a “neo-Nazi at heart,” among other things. Meloni argued that the “neo-Nazi” label “distort[ed] and falsif[ied] her political identity.” A hearing took place on 16 April 2024. On 4 October 2024, Meloni withdrew the charge.

In April 2023, Agriculture Minister Francesco Lollobrigida, Meloni's brother-in-law and Brothers of Italy member, sued Donatella Di Cesare, professor of theoretical philosophy at Sapienza University, Rome, Lazio, for defamation. Di Cesare had described Lollobrigida's espousal of a white supremacist conspiracy as “neo-Hitlerite” after he had said in a public speech on migration that “[w]e cannot surrender to the idea of ethnic replacement” – alluding to a far-right conspiracy theory popular among neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi groups that scholars claimed had historical roots in the Nazi German idea of *Umwolkung*. A hearing was due to take place in May 2024.¹⁶⁴

In the summer of 2024, the Ministry of Culture dismissed a committee of scholars and art critics who were preparing an exhibition on Futurism at the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rome, in a move critics considered part of a series of attempts by the government of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni to meddle in the cultural sphere. The new committee drastically cut the number of artworks on show and replaced them with everyday objects (many of which had been produced in Italy) including cars, motorcycles and planes, allegedly in an attempt to recreate an atmosphere of dynamism that was hailed by many of the Futurist artists but also used as propaganda by the Partito Nazionale Fascista (National Fascist Party) of Benito Mussolini (1883–1945). One of the dismissed scholars criticized the new exhibition as pushing “a grand narrative of a right-wing culture” instead of laying bare the heterogeneity of the Futurist movement and its artists' views on Fascism. Another scholar, Giancarlo Carpi, sued the ministry for breach of contract. The National Gallery had previously been criticized as a government propaganda outlet on multiple occasions. In early 2024, after the publication of *Perché l'Italia è di destra: Contro le bugie della sinistra* (Why Italy is Right-Wing: Against the Lies of the Left) by Italo Bocchino, a journalist close to Meloni's Brothers of Italy party, forty members of

¹⁶⁴ “[An Open Letter in Support of Luciano Canfora](#),” *New York Review of Books* (17 April 2024); Emily Dixon, “[Academic Prosecuted for Calling Minister's Speech 'Neo-Hitlerite'](#),” *Times Higher Education* (23 April 2024); AFP, “[Italy's Meloni Withdraws Defamation Suit Against Historian](#),” *Barron's* (4 October 2024).

the museum staff had signed a letter in protest and three members of the museum's scientific committee had resigned.¹⁶⁵

See also Cyprus, Germany, Somalia, Tunisia, United States, Vatican.

IVORY COAST (Côte d'Ivoire)

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2004, 2006–2021.

On 20 March 2024, the Council of State in the capital Abidjan declared that it lacked jurisdiction to rule on the legality of a 2018 amnesty law, based on which President Alassane Ouattara (in office since 2010) granted amnesty to around 800 prisoners accused or convicted of crimes against the state during the 2010–2011 post-election violence [See NCH *Annual Reports 2019–2021*]. On [13] August, the Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'homme (LIDHO; Ivorian Human Rights League), the Mouvement ivoirien des droits humains (MIDH; Ivorian Human Rights Movement) and the Fédération internationale pour les droits humains (FIDH; International Federation for Human Rights) filed an appeal to the Supreme Court arguing that the law aimed at national reconciliation was in fact contrary to reconciliation and violated the victims' right to justice. On 5 December, LIDHO, MIDH, and FIDH brought a case before the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) requesting it to declare the 2018 amnesty law unlawful under international law.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Elisabetta Povoledo, "[Critics Complain That Italy's Government Is Interfering in the Arts](#)," *New York Times* (13 December 2024).

¹⁶⁶ Fédération Internationale pour les Droits Humains, "[Côte d'Ivoire: Le Conseil d'État encourage l'impunité](#)" (press release; 20 March 2024); "[Human Rights Groups against Ouattara's 2018 Amnesty](#)," *Africa News* (13 August 2024); Fédération Internationale pour les Droits Humains, "[Ivory Coast: Post-Electoral Crisis Victims Challenge Alassane Ouattara's Amnesty Law in ECOWAS Court](#)" (press release; 5 December 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 139.

JAMAICA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2017–2018.

On 24 June 2025, Culture Minister Olivia Grange announced a government request to British King Charles III to seek legal advice from the judicial committee of the Privy Council, the final court of appeal for British overseas territories and some Commonwealth nations, on whether the forced transport of enslaved Africans to Jamaica and their subsequent enslavement was unlawful and constituted a crime against humanity, and whether the British government was “under an obligation to provide a remedy.” In 2022, King Charles had expressed deep sorrow for slavery, but did not issue an apology or announce any reparations.¹⁶⁷

JAPAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–2024.

On 3 July 2024, the Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling ordering the government to pay compensation to the victims of sterilization under a now-defunct eugenics law and declaring invalid a twenty-year statute of limitations. Between 1948 and 1996, at least 16,500 people had forcibly been sterilized, with another 8,500 likely having consented under great pressure. These consisted predominantly of people with intellectual impairment, as part of a campaign to “prevent a generation of poor-quality offspring.” The government subsequently issued an apology and agreed to provide compensation of up to 15 million yen (around € 92,000) for victims and their spouses. It also committed to compensate other victims who had yet to come forward, many of whom were older people. Already in 2018, a woman had sued the government for an operation she underwent when she was fifteen. In 2019, a law was passed providing 3.2 million yen (around € 20,000) in compensation per victim, an amount criticized by survivors as far too small for the severity of their suffering.¹⁶⁸

On 7 August 2024, ambassadors of the United Kingdom and the United States (US) announced that they would not attend the 9 August Nagasaki’s annual peace memorial ceremony – marking the 79th anniversary of the US atomic bomb attack in which between at least 60,000–80,000 people were killed

¹⁶⁷ “[Jamaica to Ask King Charles to Refer Issue of Reparations for Slavery to UK’s Privy Council](#),” *Guardian* (26 June 2025).

¹⁶⁸ Tomohiro Osaki, “[Victoire majeure des victimes de stérilisations forcées après une décision de la Cour suprême](#),” *La Presse* (3 July 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 45, 219.

with many suffering from long-term health effects – after the city mayor Shiro Suzuki decided not to invite the ambassador of Israel. US ambassador Rahm Emmanuel criticized Suzuki’s decision as falsely equating Russia’s war of aggression – the Russian and Belarusian ambassador had been banned from the ceremony since the 24 February 2022 invasion of Ukraine – with “Israel’s self-defense.” Suzuki claimed his decision was “not based on political judgment but [on] an intention to conduct the ceremony to console the atomic bomb victims in a peaceful and solemn manner.” The annual ceremony for the victims of Hiroshima on 6 August had included the Israeli ambassador, despite a petition against his presence gathering more than 25,000 signatures.¹⁶⁹

On 6 September 2024, the Japan Society for History Textbook, an NGO with special consultative status at the United Nations (UN) Economics and Social Council (ECOSOC), submitted a written statement in which it requested the UN Human Rights Council to rescind the 1996 Coomaraswamy report on “comfort women” – women who had been forced into prostitution by the Japanese armed forces during the Pacific War (1931–1945). It criticized the recommendations made in the report – including the full disclosure of archival sources, amendments to the educational curricula, and reparations – incorrectly arguing that many of those recommendations had already been fulfilled at the time of the report [See NCH *Annual Reports* 1996, 1998, 2001, 2005–2006, 2009–2011, 2013, 2017–2018 under Japan, NCH *Annual Report* 2021, 2024 under South Korea, and NCH *Annual Report* 2023 under Philippines]. In the final paragraph, titled “The Fact about the Japanese Military Comfort Women,” it cited the discredited research of J. Mark Ramseyer [See NCH *Annual Report* 2021] as evidence for the revisionist claim that “comfort women were originally prostitutes seeking maximum economic benefit” [See NCH *Annual Report* 2005 under Japan, and NCH *Annual Reports* 2016–2018, 2020, 2024 under South Korea].¹⁷⁰

On 27 October 2024, 21 Japanese historical societies issued a *Statement of concern over the escalation of the Gaza crisis*, in which they condemned the October 2023 Israeli invasion of Gaza as well as the fact that criticism of it was censored or regarded as antisemitism in Israel. The statement also condemned the rise of antisemitism outside Israel. The authors wrote that “In retrospect, invasion, occupation, and colonialism are precisely the same path trodden by Japan in the past. As historians who are fully aware of our own past of invasion and colonization of Asian countries and have been striving, from a historical perspective, to contribute to the building of a peaceful world, we express our concern

¹⁶⁹ Victoria Kim & Hisako Ueno, “[U.S. Ambassador to Skip Peace Ceremony in Japan over Israel’s Omission](#),” *New York Times* (7 August 2024).

¹⁷⁰ [Written Statement Submitted by Japan Society for History Textbook, a Non-Governmental Organization in Special Consultative Status](#) (A/HRC/57/NGO/10; 6 September 2024).

about the situation in Gaza and strongly call for an immediate ceasefire, observance of international law and international humanitarian law, and an end to the occupation.”¹⁷¹

See also China, Ecuador, Israel, United States, Vietnam.

JORDAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2003–2004, 2015, 2018, 2022–2023.

¹⁷¹ The Japanese Historical Council and twenty other historical societies, *Statement of Concern over the Escalation of the Gaza Crisis, Calling for an Immediate Ceasefire, Observance of International Law, and an End to the Occupation* (27 October 2024); Shinji Asada (Secretary of the Special Commission for International Exchange of the Japanese Historical Council), personal communication (10 March 2025).

KAZAKHSTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 1999–2001, 2007, 2012, 2022, 2024.

In February 2024, the government blocked a website providing youth-targeted information about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues, citing national traditions and the need to “protect children.” In July 2024, the Almaty police department opened a criminal case against queer dancer Alisher Sultanbekuly over a video he made of himself and two women dancing in a traditional yurt. He was charged with “incitement of social, national, tribal, racial, class or religious hatred” and faced up to seven years in prison. Then, in August 2024, the Ministry of Culture and Information “partially” supported a ban on “LGBT propaganda,” akin to similar bans in Hungary and Russia, among other places.

The arrest, ban, and blockage were part of broader socio-political tensions between various groups turning away from the heritage of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (1936–1991). For some groups, actively supported by the government of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (in office since 2019), this decolonial gesture consisted of a return to pre-Soviet ethnic Kazakh customs while excluding feminism and LGBTQ+-rights often presented as “Western imports.” Others, including Sultanbekuly, were trying to bring together Kazakh customs and gender emancipation, for example through referring to the queerphobia that was part of Soviet policies.¹⁷²

KENYA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999–2000, 2002–2005, 2007, 2009–2018, 2020–2024.

On 28 May 2025, novelist and playwright Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (born James Ngugi) (1938–2025) died. On 31 December 1977, the Marxist-inspired Ngũgĩ, educated in the history of English literature and language at Makerere University College, Kampala, Uganda, and head of the department of literature, Nairobi University, was arrested and detained “for reasons of public security” without charge or trial in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison at Kiambu. His arrest followed the ban on a play in Gikuyu that he had co-written with Ngũgĩ wa Mirii, *I Will Marry When I Want*. It dealt with the issue of *kamatimu*, the Kenyans who collaborated with the British colonial administration by serving in the Home Guard during the Mau Mau rebellion (1952–1956). It also treated the struggle over land between a peasant farmer and a rich landowner. In the words of Eliud Njenga, the Kiambu district commissioner, it “promoted

¹⁷² Aizada Arystanbek, “[Kazakh Artists Challenge Government’s Anti-LGBT Crackdown](#),” *Open Democracy* (17 October 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 267.

the class struggle.” On 2 October 1977, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the declaration of the anti-Mau Mau emergency, the play’s premiere took place. Shortly after the play was staged, a strike in the local shoe factory broke out. On 16 November, its performance license was revoked on the grounds that it was “too provocative, would make some people bitter and was opening up old graves.” The arrest was probably also linked to other works related to the Mau Mau rebellion, including his novel *Petals of Blood* (1977) and his co-written play *Mzalendo Kimathi* (1977), about the trial of Mau Mau leader Dedan Kimathi (1920–1957). During his arrest, part of his private library was confiscated. On 6 January 1978, Ngũgĩ’s detention was announced. For two weeks there was no news about his whereabouts and neither his pregnant wife nor his lawyer was allowed to see him. He was allegedly ill-treated in prison during the first months. From the books sent to him in prison, some, such as *Kenya from Within: A Short Political History* (London 1927), by William MacGregor Ross, discussing British colonialism in Kenya in the 1920s, *Roots* (Garden City 1976) by Alex Haley (1921–1992), and *The Second Word: More Essays on Kenyan History* by historian William Ochieng (1943–2013), were returned to the senders. Ngũgĩ was released on 12 December 1978 as part of an amnesty for political prisoners, two months after the inauguration of President Daniel arap Moi (1924–2020; in office 1978–2002). One of the many who had pleaded for his release was historian Ali Mazrui, who had written a letter to President Jomo Kenyatta ([1891]–1978) in January 1978 and a paper *The Detention of Ngugi wa Thiong’o: Report on a Private Visit* (April 1978; published in 1990). Nairobi University, which had advertised Ngũgĩ’s position as vacant following his arrest, did not reinstate him despite a petition signed by 400 academics. In March 1979, Ngũgĩ was briefly rearrested. His family was harassed, he remained unemployed, and his books were removed from the school reading lists.

While in prison Ngũgĩ wrote a novel in Gikuyu on toilet paper, in 1982 published as *Devil on the Cross: Free Thoughts on Toilet-Paper*. About his prison experience he wrote *Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary* (1981), banned in Kenya. In February 1982 the performances of *Mother, Sing for Me*, a 1981 musical play dealing with colonial repression and rebellion in the 1930s and showing historical slides, were canceled because it received no license. The theater was broken up by the police in March. In June 1982 Ngũgĩ went to the United Kingdom to promote *Devil on the Cross* and, on learning of his impending arrest in Nairobi after an attempted coup during his absence, asked for asylum there. In August 1984 his views on the Mau Mau rebellion were criticized at a conference of the Historical Association of Kenya. As an exile he founded the London-based association Umoja (Unity) in 1987, which stood for a radical redistribution of land. Later he went to the United States and became a professor of comparative literature at New York University and the University of California at Irvine. In 2004, he temporarily returned to Kenya on a lecture tour but he was attacked by armed men in his apartment. His first novels, *Weep Not, Child* (1964), *The River Between* (1965), and *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) also dealt with Mau Mau (in 1955 his family house and village had been razed in an anti-Mau Mau campaign). In January 1969 he had resigned as a lecturer in English at University College, Nairobi

(1967–1969) in protest against Kenyatta’s suppression of academic freedom but he had resumed teaching there in 1971.¹⁷³

On 7 July 2025, police killed at least 31 peaceful demonstrators protesting against President William Ruto on Saba Saba Day (“Seven Seven Day”), the 35th anniversary of the 1990 protests, on 7 July, against then President Daniel arap Moi’s rule (1978–2002), which ultimately led to multiparty democracy. The 2025 protest had begun in June following the death of a teacher in police custody who had allegedly criticized a senior police official on social media.¹⁷⁴

KOREA, NORTH

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001, 2006–2007, 2009–2011, 2013–2015, 2017, 2019, 2024.

Despite years of international condemnation, accountability for grave human rights violations remained elusive. In 2024, the tenth anniversary of the landmark 2014 United Nations (UN) Commission of Inquiry (COI) report, international efforts to advance accountability gained renewed traction. In March, the UN Special Rapporteur on North Korea dedicated her report to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to efforts made and measures still needed to advance accountability. In April, the HRC adopted a resolution requesting the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to publish a comprehensive report on human rights since 2014, and to take stock of COI’s recommendations. The resolution also increased OHCHR resources to focus on criminal accountability for human rights violations.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Richard Lea & Sian Cain, “[Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Giant of African Literature, Dies aged 87](#),” *Guardian* (28 May 2025); Alan Cowell, “[Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Writer Who Condemned Colonists and Elites, Dies at 87](#),” *New York Times* (28 May 2025); Emnet Tadesse Woldegiorgis, “[Ngugi wa Thiong’o: Revolutionary Legacy Beyond Language, Nation](#),” *New York Times* (2 June 2025); Amnesty International, *Report 1978* (London 1979), 56–57, 1979, 23; Africa Watch, *Academic Freedom and Human Rights Abuses in Africa* (New York 1991), 20; Rob Buijtenhuijs, “‘Free Thoughts on Toilet-Paper’: Schrijverschap, staat en ideologie in Kenya,” *Groniek*, 1985, no. 91, 9; *Index on Censorship*, 1978, no. 2, 61; 1978, no. 3, 7–10; 1978, no. 6, 78–79; 1979, no. 2, 67; 1979, no. 6, 67–68; 1980, no. 3, 20–24; 1981, no. 3, 41–46; 1981, no. 6, 80–82; 1982, no. 3, 46; 1982, no. 4, 41–42; 1983, no. 1, 22–26; 1983, no. 4, 30; 1988, no. 5, 91–94; Willy Mutunga & Miana Kiai, “The State of Academic Freedom in Kenya 1992–94,” in Codesria, *The State of Academic Freedom in Africa 1995* (Dakar 1996) 88; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary* (London and Nairobi 1981), xvii–xxiii, 5–8, 33, 132–33, 159; Hannington Ochwada, “Men of Literature and Kenya’s Historiography: An Appraisal of the Writings of Ngugi wa Thiong’o,” *Transafrican Journal of History*, 1995, 151–161; Carol Sicherman, *Ngugi wa Thiong’o, The Making of a Rebel: A Source Book in Kenyan Literature and Resistance* (London 1990), 4–5, 11–16, 33–40; Martin Tucker, ed., *Literary Exile in the Twentieth Century: An Analysis and Biographical Dictionary* (Westport 1991), 514–516; Jennifer A. Widner, *The Rise of a Party-State in Kenya: From “Harambee!” to “Nyayo!”* (Berkeley 1992), 177; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, “When Truth Is Hunted,” *Index on Censorship*, 47, no. 3 (Autumn 2018), 58–60.

¹⁷⁴ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 352.

¹⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 352.

KOREA, SOUTH

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1998–2001, 2003, 2006, 2008–2010, 2012–2013, 2016–2024.

In 2014, novelist Han Kang (1970–) was put on a cultural blacklist after publication of her novel *Human Acts* (2014), about two boys during the 1980 pro-democracy uprising in Kwangju (Han's hometown) against the then military dictatorship. The novel received several prizes. In 2024 Han was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.¹⁷⁶

On 6 June 2024, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee raised concerns that the government had yet to implement a 2023 Seoul High Court decision to provide compensation to “comfort women” who had been subjected to sexual slavery by the Japanese military during the Pacific War (1931–1945) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. The committee recommended that the government provide survivors with redress and reparations, including access to specialized medical, psychological and social support for the harms resulting from their trauma.¹⁷⁷

On 15 November 2024, three United Nations Special Rapporteurs sent an allegations letter to the government concerning the decision of Dongducheon city government to demolish the historical site of the Sexually Transmitted Disease Management Center, a former public facility where serious human rights violations were committed for several decades against “comfort women.”¹⁷⁸

On 26 March 2025, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – set up in 2020 to investigate, among others, human rights violations committed during the military governments of Park Chung Hee (1917–1979; in office as president between 1962–1979), Chun Doo-hwan (1931–2021; in office as president between 1980–1988) and Roh Tae-woo (1932–2021; in office as president between 1988–1993) [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*] – published its report documenting evidence of the coerced adoption of at least 170,000 children from the 1950s up to 1987. Most of the children, whose mothers

¹⁷⁶ Yumi Jeung, “[Nobel Literature Prize Rekindles Debate on Humanities’ Value](#),” *University World News* (16 October 2024); Victoria Kim, “[Atrocities Made a South Korean City Infamous – A Novelist Made It Immortal](#),” *New York Times* (6 December 2024); Victoria Kim, “[A Nobel Laureate Who Mines Her Country’s Nightmares, and Her Own](#),” *New York Times* (21 January 2025).

¹⁷⁷ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, [Concluding Observations on the Ninth Periodic Report of the Republic of Korea](#) (6 June 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 337.

¹⁷⁸ United Nations Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, [Allegations Letter AL KOR 4/2024](#) (15 November 2024), and [Response 1 by South Korea](#) (8 January 2025), [Response 2 by South Korea](#) (10 February 2025).

were often detained in government-run welfare centers under the so-called “social purification” policy, were adopted abroad. The investigation had started in 2022 after 367 South Korean adoptees from eleven countries had petitioned the TRC, arguing they were falsely registered as orphans to be put up for adoption. The TRC recommended authorities to issue a formal apology and compensate the victims.

In April 2025, the TRC announced a pause in its investigation of 311 cases of coerced adoption citing shortage of time (its mandate ended in May 2025 and proposals by opposition politicians for its extension and expanded jurisdiction had not been passed) and differences of opinion over whether the lack of documentation in these cases constituted a barrier for individuals to be recognized as victims, or was a state crime in and of itself. The commission was criticized for having been politicized – including by the appointment of its chairwoman Park Sun-young (who had made favorable comments in the past about the 1961 military coup and the presidency of Chun Doo-hwan) by then President Yoon Suk Yeol (who was impeached for declaring martial law on 3 December 2024).¹⁷⁹

See also Vietnam.

KOSOVO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2021–2024. For previous entries: *see* Serbia.

In September 2024, the Court of Appeals Panel at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC) in The Hague reduced the sentence of Kosovo Liberation Army commander Salih Mustafa for a second time, to fifteen years in prison. Mustafa had been convicted in December 2022 by the KSC for war crimes committed between 1998 and 2000, including murder, torture, and arbitrary detention [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2021, 2023].¹⁸⁰

See also Serbia.

¹⁷⁹ Hannah Cho & Asta Kongsted, “[South Korea Reveals New Evidence of ‘Violent and Systemic’ Forced Adoption Abroad](#),” *Guardian* (10 September 2024); Tessa Wong, Hosu Lee & Jean Mackenzie, “[South Korea Admits to ‘Mass Exporting’ Children for Adoption](#),” *BBC News* (26 March 2025); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 45, 337; Se Eun Gong, “[South Korea Halted Its Adoption Fraud Investigation: Adoptees Still Demand the Truth](#),” *National Public Radio* (6 May 2025).

¹⁸⁰ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 404–405.

KUWAIT

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999–2000, 2004–2005, 2018, 2021, 2024.

On 25 January 2024, Anwar Hayati, a doctor and bidūn jinsiya (“without nationality”; stateless) activist, was sentenced in absentia to four years in prison over comments he had made on social media. The comments, including about the 1919–1920 border conflict with the territory governed by Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud (1875–1953) – later founder and first King of Saudi Arabia (in office as king between 1932–1953) – were ruled to be insulting to Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (Kuwait’s emir since 2023) and Saudi Arabia. In September 2024, Hayati went into exile in Europe.¹⁸¹

See also United States.

KYRGYZSTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010–2013, 2016–2017, 2021–2022.

In late 2024, President Sadyr Japarov signed a law aimed to ensure “national stability” that had a chilling effect on the freedom of expression. As a result of the law, several akyns – oral storytellers that interweave history, philosophy, spirituality, and mythology with social commentary and whose practices are recognized by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage – faced persecution.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ “[Kuwait: Authorities Must End Wave of Repression against Critics](#),” *Amnesty International* (27 June 2024); “[Anwar Hayati](#),” *PEN America Writers at Risk* ([ongoing database]).

¹⁸² “[Traditional Storytellers in Kyrgyzstan Face Scrutiny from Authorities](#),” *Times of Central Asia* (28 March 2025).

LAOS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2023.

LATVIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2006, 2008, 2015–2016, 2019, 2022–2023.

See Russia.

LEBANON

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2003, 2006–2024.

On 1 July 2024, national and international human rights organizations and victims' families sent an open letter to the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council calling for the establishment of an international, independent and impartial fact-finding mission into human rights violations related to the 2020 Beirut Port explosion [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021, 2023–2024*]. In January 2023, an attempt by the lead investigator of the domestic inquiry, Tarek Bitar, to resume the investigation by charging eight suspects, including top prosecutor Ghassan Oueidat, was thwarted by Oueidat himself [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. On 16 January 2025, Bitar again tried to resume the case by summoning ten additional employees and security officials implicated in the blast. In the week prior, newly elected President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister-designate Nawaf Salam had signaled the government's intent to ensure accountability for the blast and end any interference in the judiciary's work.¹⁸³

After the 1 October 2024 invasion by Israeli forces, Israeli airstrikes destroyed multiple heritage sites in Lebanon:

- In Beirut, historic neighborhoods including religious spaces were damaged or destroyed. In Bashoura, a cemetery, containing the graves of Ottoman-era Governor of Syria Ahmad Hamdi Pasha (1826–1885) and former Prime Minister Shafik Al-Wazzan (1925–1999; in office between 1980–

¹⁸³ Ramzi Kaiss, "[Beirut Blast Investigation Resumes Lebanon's New Government, President Should Ensure Justice for Victims](#)," *Human Rights Watch* (21 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 237.

1984), were damaged. A 28 October report by the *Heritage Education Program* and *Heritage for Peace*, among others, expressed concern that the UMAM Documentation & Research organization, co-founded in 2004 by archivist Lokman Slim (1962–2021) [See below and NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*], in Dahiyeh, Beirut, which contained archival documents dating back to the 1840s, was under threat.¹⁸⁴

- On 8 October, Tebnin castle, built during the Crusader period (1095–1291), was damaged. A shrine in the castle dedicated to Shamoun as-Safa (also known as Simon Peter), one of Jesus of Nazareth's disciples, was destroyed.¹⁸⁵
- In Derdghaya, on 9 October, an airstrike heavily damaged the nineteenth-century St. Georges Church.¹⁸⁶
- In Nabatiyeh, on 12 October, the nineteenth-century Souk Al-Ithnain Al-Shaabi was partially destroyed. Rockets also damaged and destroyed several historic houses, including the nineteenth-century Chahine cultural center and Harouf heritage house and historic quarter.¹⁸⁷
- On 13 October, the Ottoman-era Mosque in Kfar Tebnit was damaged and its minaret destroyed.¹⁸⁸
- In Douris, on 14 October, an airstrike severely damaged the Muslim shrine Qubbat Douris (built in the thirteenth century CE) and possibly parts of a Bronze Age settlement.¹⁸⁹
- On 17 October, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) expressed serious concern over critical threats to cultural heritage. It specifically addressed the risks posed to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of the historic Phoenician city of Tyre and of Baalbek, known for its Roman architecture. In November, UNESCO granted the highest level of immunity against attacks and military use under international law to thirty-four sites, including Tyre and Baalbek.¹⁹⁰

On 2 February 2025, Beirut investigative judge Bilal Halawi stated that there was insufficient evidence to identify the perpetrators of the murder of publisher and archivist Lokman Mohsen Slim (1962–2021)

¹⁸⁴ Heritage Education Program, et al., [Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Lebanon Due to the Ongoing War](#) (October 2024), 5–10.

¹⁸⁵ Nada Maucourant Atallah & Jamie Prentis, [“War on Culture: Lebanon’s Heritage Sites Destroyed in Israeli Strikes,”](#) *The National* (6 December 2024).

¹⁸⁶ Heritage Education Program, et al., [Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Lebanon Due to the Ongoing War](#) (October 2024), 23.

¹⁸⁷ Heritage Education Program, et al., [Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Lebanon Due to the Ongoing War](#) (October 2024), 21–23; Walid El Houri, [“Our Heart that Burned’: Israel Is Wiping Out Centuries of Heritage in Southern Lebanon,”](#) *Global Voices* (14 October 2024).

¹⁸⁸ Heritage Education Program, et al., [Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Lebanon Due to the Ongoing War](#) (October 2024), 24.

¹⁸⁹ Heritage Education Program, et al., [Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Lebanon Due to the Ongoing War](#) (October 2024), 14.

¹⁹⁰ [“ICOMOS Statement on Immediate and Grave Threats to Lebanon’s Cultural Heritage,”](#) ICOMOS (17 October 2024); Jwana Chahoud, [“Saving Lebanon’s Cultural Heritage: A Global Effort to Protect its Endangered Heritage,”](#) *Arché Orient* (13 December 2024); Euan Ward, [“Israeli Strikes Threaten Lebanon’s Archaeological Treasures,”](#) *New York Times* (25 November 2024).

[See above and NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*] and closed the investigation. The decision, coming two days before the fourth anniversary of Slim’s murder, was criticized by his family and legal team. The investigation had already drawn criticism from several international human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch (in 2022 and 2024) and United Nations human rights experts (in 2023). In November 2023, upon the retirement of the first investigative judge Charbel Abi Samra, only three witnesses had been heard.¹⁹¹

See also Argentina.

LIBERIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2001, 2004–2015, 2018, 2021, 2024.

On 2 May 2024, President Joseph Boakai (in office since 2024) signed into law the creation of the War and Economic Crimes Court (WECC) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. Boakai chose Jonathan Massaquoi as the WECC executive director, despite protests from civil society organizations expressing concern over potential conflicts of interest related to Massaquoi’s previous legal representation of Agnes Reeves Taylor, who had been charged with torture in the United Kingdom in 2017 under the principle of universal jurisdiction, and Gibril Massaquoi [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Taylor was the wife of former President Charles Taylor (in office between 1997–2003), who in April 2012 had been sentenced to fifty years in prison by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991–2002) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2004–2012* under Sierra Leone, *Annual Reports 2007, 2009–2011, 2015, 2021* under Liberia]. On 15 August, Boakai removed Massaquoi and called for the reconstitution of the office.¹⁹²

See also Guinea.

¹⁹¹ [“Lebanese Court Faces Backlash as Investigation into Lokman Slim’s Killing Hits Dead End,”](#) *Kataeb.org* (2 February 2025); OLJ/AFP, [“La Famille de Lokman Slim dénonce la suspension de l’enquête,”](#) *L’Orient–Le Jour* (2 February 2025); UMAM D&R, Lokman Slim Foundation & Dar Al-Jadeed, [“Justice as a Pillar for Sovereignty: Commemoration of the Fourth Anniversary of Lokman Slim’s Assassination”](#) (Press release; 2 February 2025); Ramzi Kaiss, [“Still No Justice for Slain Lebanese Researcher’s Family,”](#) *Human Rights Watch* (3 February 2024); Véronique Ginouvès, [“4 ans plus tard: #JusticeForLokman,”](#) *Hypothèses 1* (4 February 2025).

¹⁹² Aaron Weah, [“Why It Is so Hard to Appoint a Director for Liberia’s War Crimes Court,”](#) *Justiceinfo.net* (8 October 2024).

LIBYA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2003, 2005–2021, 2023–2024.

In November 2023, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan, announced his office's intention to complete active investigations in Libya by the end of 2025. In May 2024, he presented the United Nations Security Council with a roadmap, including his intention to open an office in Tripoli. He said that progress had been made on crimes in detention facilities during the civil war (2014–2020) and that his office provided support to national investigations into crimes committed against migrants. Saif al-Islam, son of former ruler Muammar Gaddafi and wanted by the ICC since 2011 for serious crimes, remained a fugitive [See NCH *Annual Reports 2012–2021*]. In October 2024, the ICC unsealed six more warrants for commanders and other members of the al-Kaniyat militia on charges of war crimes, including murder, torture and enforced disappearances, in Tarhouna, which the group controlled until June 2020.¹⁹³

The United Nations (UN) Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) led a process to consolidate draft reconciliation laws covering amnesties, reparations, truth telling, and justice pertaining to the civil war (2014–2020) between the Presidential Council, House of Representatives (HoR), High Council of State (HCS), and the Constitution Drafting Assembly. The process had been complicated after the Tobruk-based HoR withdrew its support for the Tripoli-based UN-backed Government of National Unity and instead elected a Government of National Stability in Benghazi. The HoR's withdrawal was rejected by the Tripoli-based HCS. As of October 2024, the unified draft law had not yet passed the HoR and had not been put to a vote.¹⁹⁴

LITHUANIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2005, 2009, 2015, 2018, 2021–2022.

See Belarus.

¹⁹³ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 287–288; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 66.

¹⁹⁴ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 286; “[Libya's Parliament Passes No-confidence Vote in Unity Government](#),” *Al Jazeera* (21 September 2021).

MACEDONIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2006–2008, 2010–2015, 2017–2018. From 2021: *See* North Macedonia.

MADAGASCAR

Previous *Annual Report* entry: 2018.

On 2 April 2024, the United Kingdom-based law firm Leigh Day issued a letter of claim (often a precursor for a lawsuit) against mining company Rio Tinto [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2020–2022, 2024 under Australia], alleging that mines of its subsidiary QIT Madagascar Minerals (QMM) had caused elevated lead levels in drinking water in Anôsy. QMM had begun its operations exploring for ilmenite and monazite in 1986 and had since been accused of damaging endangered forest, threatening rare endemic species, forcing villagers off their land without proper compensation, destroying fishers' livelihoods by contaminating lakes and waterways, and failing to honor its promises to employ local people. The letter of claim cited tests showing that 58 people living around the mine had elevated levels of lead, the majority of which exceed the threshold at which the World Health Organization recommended clinical and environmental interventions.¹⁹⁵

MALAWI

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2011–2012, 2019, 2021, 2024.

MALAYSIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 2002, 2007–2008, 2010–2011, 2016–2017, 2019–2024.

See Singapore, Thailand.

¹⁹⁵ Neha Wadekar, "[Rio Tinto's Madagascar Mine May Face Lawsuit over Pollution Claims](#)," *Guardian* (4 April 2024).

MALDIVES

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002–2004, 2006, 2009–2010, 2013, 2020–2021, 2024.

MALI

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2011, 2013–2021, 2023–2024.

On 21 June 2024, the International Criminal Court (ICC) unsealed an arrest warrant against the alleged former head of Ansar al-Dine Iyad Ag Ghaly (also known as “Abou Fadl”) for alleged crimes committed in northern Mali between 2012–2013. On 20 November 2024, the ICC sentenced Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] to ten years in prison.¹⁹⁶

See also Niger.

MALTA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2012, 2021, 2024.

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2013, 2015.

Between 27 and 31 March 2025, the United Nations (UN) Office for Disarmament Affairs held its annual conference to discuss the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which went into force in 2021 and imposed on its 98 signatories a ban on developing, testing, stockpiling, using, or threatening to use nuclear weapons, or helping other countries in such activities. During the conference, UN ambassador for the Marshall Islands John Silk refrained from signing the treaty, expressing concern that article 6 – calling for countries bound by the treaty to provide victim assistance and environmental

¹⁹⁶ “[ICC Convicts al-Qaeda-Linked Leader of War Crimes in Mali’s Timbuktu](#),” *Al Jazeera* (26 June 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 306; Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 33, 252.

remediation – could absolve countries from the responsibility to meaningfully address damage caused by nuclear tests and urged the establishment of an international trust fund.

Between 1946 and 1958, the United States (US; not a signatory to the treaty) detonated 67 nuclear bombs on the Marshall Islands. In October 2024, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had reported that radiation exposure from the nuclear tests had caused the “proliferation of cancers, of painful memories of miscarriages, stillbirths, and of what some Marshallese refer to as ‘jellyfish babies’ – infants born with translucent skin and no bones” and called on the US and Marshall Islands governments and the UN to “consider establishing truth and non-repetition mechanisms, as well as adopting and supporting a transitional justice-driven approach” [See NCH *Annual Reports 2013, 2015*].¹⁹⁷

MAURITANIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2002, 2009, 2011, 2017, 2019–2020, 2024.

MAURITIUS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2012.

On 3 October 2024, the United Kingdom and Mauritius announced an agreement on the transfer of the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Islands to Mauritius. The deal, details of which remained undisclosed at the time, was hailed by some as a “recognition of past wrongs” and an acknowledgement of the indigenous people’s right to reparations. Others, however, criticized it for insufficiently specifying the rights of the Chagossian people, including the conditions for reparations and the indigenous people’s right to return after they had been forcibly removed by British forces, with the help of the United States, in the 1960s – in what Human Rights Watch described as a crime against humanity. Concerns also arose over policies of the Mauritian government, which issued new passports and birth certificates to Chagossians that referred to “Mauritius” as the place of birth and sometimes came with the names of parents and other family members removed. The Mauritian government did not recognize

¹⁹⁷ “UN Rights Council Examines Nuclear Legacy Consequences in the Marshall Islands,” *UN News* (4 October 2024); Jon Letman, “‘Never Forget’: Pacific Countries Remember Nuclear Test Legacy as Weapons Ban Treaty Debated,” *Guardian* (20 March 2025); Benetick Kabua Maddison, “The Ongoing Consequences of the U.S. Nuclear Testing Program on the Marshall Islands,” *Heinrich Böll Stiftung* (9 October 2023); Wiliam Burr, “Castle BRAVO at 70: The Worst Nuclear Test in U.S. History,” *National Security Archive* (29 February 2024).

Chagossians right to self-determination. In 2019, the International Court of Justice had published an advisory opinion arguing that the island group belonged to Mauritius and the transfer of sovereignty should be part of the decolonization process [See *NCH Annual Reports 2012–2013, 2021, 2023* under United Kingdom].¹⁹⁸

MEXICO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 1999, 2001–2024.

Throughout 2024, the military obstructed the investigation and prosecution of past human rights abuses, including the 2014 Ayotzinapa mass kidnapping case [See *NCH Annual Reports 2015, 2021–2024*] and widespread military abuses committed during the *Guerra sucia* (Dirty War; 1964–2000) [See *NCH Annual Reports 2005–2012, 2015, 2017–2020, 2022, 2024*]. Investigators said the military hid, destroyed, or denied the existence of records of human rights violations and pressured authorities to drop criminal charges against soldiers implicated in abuses [See *NCH Annual Report 2024*]. On 25 June 2025, the Supreme Court ordered the Attorney General’s office to release a public version of its investigation in the Ayotzinapa case.¹⁹⁹

In January 2024, the government *de facto* closed the office of the Centro nacional de identificación humana (CNIH; National Human Identification Center), a government body operated by the Comisión Nacional de Búsqueda (CNB; National Search Commission), by draining its resources and dismissing many of its staff. The center was created in 2022 to address the lack of forensic capacity in many prosecutors’ offices. In September 2024, journalists found that more than 72,000 human remains had been labeled as unidentified by state morgues from 2006 to 2023. Most had been buried in municipal graves.²⁰⁰

In February 2024, human rights organizations reported at a hearing before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights that sixteen members of “search collectives” – groups, often set up by victim’s families,

¹⁹⁸ Katie McQue, “[Chagos Islanders Fear Loss of Identity as Birth Certificates Altered to Remove Disputed Homeland](#),” *Guardian* (2 May 2024); Janet H. Anderson, “[Will the Chagos Treaty Address the Wrongs of the Past?](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (22 November 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 508; “[‘That’s When the Nightmare Started’: UK and US Forced Displacement of the Chagossians and Ongoing Colonial Crimes](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (15 February 2023).

¹⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 312; “[Mexico’s Top Court Orders Release of Ayotzinapa Missing Students Case File](#),” *Reuters* (25 June 2025).

²⁰⁰ Jessica Xantomila & Arturo Sánchez, “[Suspenden de facto labores del Centro Nacional de Identificación Humana](#),” *La Jornada* (5 February 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 309–310.

that investigated disappearances in the absence of effective government action – had been killed during the administration of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (in office between 2018–2024) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022, 2024*]. López Obrador repeatedly falsely claimed that the official number of missing people had been exaggerated to harm him politically.²⁰¹

On 16 August and 10 October 2024, the Mecanismo para la Verdad y el Esclarecimiento Histórico (MEH; Mechanism for Truth and Historical Clarification) – a part of the Comisión para el Acceso a la Verdad, el Esclarecimiento Histórico y el Impulso a la Justicia de las violaciones graves a los derechos humanos cometidas de 1965 a 1990 (CoVEHJ; Commission for Access to Truth, Historical Clarification and the Promotion of Justice for Grave Human Rights Violations Committed between 1965 and 1990) – presented two comprehensive reports on state violence during the Dirty War (1965–2000) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2024*]. MEH’s work was complicated by internal differences among the five commissioners about the scope of repression. After MEH was established in 2021, one commissioner resigned (historian Aleida García Aguirre). Three commissioners – Abel Barrera, David Fernández, and Carlos Pérez Ricart – produced the six-volume report *Fue el Estado, 1965–2000* (It Was the State, 1965–2000), while commissioner Eugenia Allier published the four-volume report *Verdades innegables: Por un México sin impunidad* (Undeniable Truths: For a Mexico Without Impunity).

Both reports emphasized the vital role of archives in shaping their understanding of the Dirty War. Although CoVEHJ’s mandate granted it full and unfettered access to state records from the era, the Secretariat of National Defense (Sedena) and the Center for National Intelligence (CNI) refused to turn over relevant files. The MEH denounced this publicly and eventually released six separate technical reports detailing the missing documentation and the nature of the government’s secrecy. These objections angered President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who in October 2023 slammed the investigators as liars, declaring that Sedena had turned over all records and that the government was committed to “clarify everything, to hide *absolutely nothing*, to make everything transparent.”

Later, it was revealed that historian and CoVEH coordinator, Camilo Vicente Ovalle, had been targeted by the Israeli spyware Pegasus since at least December 2022 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. As Pegasus contracts were controlled by the Mexican Armed Forces, this meant that the same army denying access to critical files for MEH was secretly spying on the man leading the investigations. Alejandro Encinas, former undersecretary for human rights and CoVEH president, was also targeted by Pegasus. When CoVEH concluded its work in September 2024, outgoing President López Obrador held no public reception or presentation, but left MEH to deliver the two reports to the public on its own.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 309–310.

²⁰² Kate Doyle & Claire Dorfman, [“Truth Commission Documents 25 Years of State Violence During Mexican Dirty War,”](#) *National Security Archive* (19 August 2024); Kate Doyle & Claire Dorfman, [“Fifty Years of Silence: Mexico Faces the Legacy of its Dirty War,”](#) *National Security Archive* (20 December 2024); Mecanismo para la Verdad y el Esclarecimiento Histórico, [Verdades Innegables: Por un México sin impunidad](#)

On 25 September 2024, incoming President Claudia Sheinbaum decided to not invite Spanish King Felipe VI to her inauguration on 1 October after he had declined to apologize for abuses during the conquest of Mexico (1519–1521) and its subsequent colonization (1521–1821), despite an official request on 1 March 2019 sent by then President Andres Manuel López Obrador. At the time, Spain’s foreign ministry had rejected it, arguing that the conquest should not be “judged in light of contemporary considerations.”²⁰³

In 2025, the Grupo de trabajo sobre archivos y derechos humanos de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Archivos (Working group on archives and human rights of the Latin American Association of Archives) expressed concern over the 20 December 2024 constitutional reform on access to information and protection of personal data which replaced the Instituto Nacional de Transparencia, Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos Personales (INAI; National Institute of Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data) as an autonomous constitutional body with the Secretaría Anticorrupción y Buen Gobierno (Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Secretariat). It demanded that the transition between both institutions would occur in accordance with the policies and procedures established in the General Law on Archives and other legal provisions.²⁰⁴

MOLDOVA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2003, 2010, 2022–2024.

MONGOLIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007, 2013.

(four volumes; Mexico 2024); Mecanismo para la Verdad y el Esclarecimiento Histórico, [Fue el Estado \(1965–1990\)](#) (six volumes; Mexico 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 36, 256–257.

²⁰³ Redacción Eme-Equis, “[Sheinbaum justifica: no se invitó a Felipe VI por no responder a AMLO sobre la Conquista](#),” *Eme-Equis* (24 September 2024); David Alire García & Belén Carreño, “[Mexico Snubs Spanish King As Spat over Colonial Past Flares Up](#),” *Reuters* (26 September 2024); “[Mexico Demands Apology from Spain and the Vatican over Conquest](#),” *BBC News* (26 March 2019).

²⁰⁴ Grupo de Trabajo sobre Archivos y Derechos Humanos de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Archivos (ALA), [Acerca de la situación de extinción de los órganos garantes de los derechos de acceso a la información y protección de datos personales en México](#) (press release; no date; 2025).

MONTENEGRO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2008–2009, 2011–2013, 2015–2017, 2021–2024.

On 26 March 2024, a Podgorica court dropped all charges against historian Boban Batrićević (1988–) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].²⁰⁵

See also Croatia.

MOROCCO / WESTERN SAHARA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2013, 2015–2018, 2020–2024.

In July 2024, King Mohammed VI (in office since 1999) issued a royal pardon that included historian and human rights activist Maâti Monjib (1962–) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016, 2020–2024*]. The pardon did not include the lifting of his travel ban (in place since 2020). On 3 April 2025, after having been prevented from leaving the country at Rabat-Sale Airport to attend a conference at the University of Sorbonne, Paris, Monjib went on hunger strike.²⁰⁶

On 4 September 2024, the National Human Rights Council (CNDH) announced it would carry out genetic tests to confirm the identities of human remains in the former secret detention center of Tazmamart, in which authorities subjected detainees to torture and other ill-treatment between 1973 and 1991. The announcement was criticized by the Families of the Victims of Tazmamart for coming too late and for not incorporating their demands for reparations. They further called for a thorough and impartial investigation into the circumstances and causes of the deaths of prisoners in Tazmamart. According to the CNDH, as of June 2024 financial compensation had been made to 27,723 people since 1999 totaling US\$ 211.8 million.²⁰⁷

See also Algeria, Egypt.

²⁰⁵ PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 80.

²⁰⁶ Elodie Farge, “Morocco’s King Pardons Journalists and Human Rights Activists Critical of Government,” *Middle East Eye* (30 July 2024); PEN International, [Identity on Trial: Persecution and Resistance](#) (London: PEN International, 2025), 111; Omar Brousky, “Maati Monjib: ‘Corruption Is Rife in Morocco’,” *Orient XXI* (21 April 2025).

²⁰⁷ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 264.

MOZAMBIQUE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2018, 2020, 2023–2024.

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997–2001, 2003, 2005–2006, 2008–2024.

On 27 November 2024, International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Karim Khan requested an arrest warrant for the commander-in-chief of the military (and head of the State Administration Council junta since February 2021), Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, for the alleged crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of the Rohingya committed between August and December 2017. In August 2017, security forces had begun a sweeping campaign of massacres, rape, and arson against Rohingya in northern Rakhine State that killed at least 25,000 people according to a United Nations fact-finding mission and forced more than 700,000 to flee to Bangladesh, in what many human rights organizations believed constituted genocide. The ICC investigation was limited to crimes committed at least in part in Bangladesh, an ICC member country, due to the court's jurisdiction rules.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 329.

NAMIBIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 2006–2009, 2011, 2016–2018, 2023.

In March 2024, the OvaHerero and Nama Indigenous Peoples – descendants of victims of the 1904–1908 genocide under Germany’s colonial rule – demanded renewed talks with the German government for reparations and the return of ancestral land [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021, 2024* under Germany and *Annual Report 2023* under Namibia]. The affected communities said that the negotiations between Namibia and Germany over a joint declaration had excluded the meaningful participation of their representatives and that the declaration failed to provide adequate reparation measures, including land restitution. On 19 December, the governments announced an agreement. The German government apologized for “abominable atrocities committed ... [that] from today’s perspective would be called genocide,” and announced a shared € 1,050 million “reparation and development support plan” for a maximum of thirty years and € 50 million for “projects on reconciliation, remembrance, research and education.” The Ovaherero Traditional Authority and Nama Traditional Leaders rejected the agreement. In early 2023, they had submitted a lawsuit to the High Court of Namibia in Windhoek seeking a judicial review to declare the declaration unlawful under the Constitution and in breach of a 2006 motion adopted by the National Assembly.²⁰⁹

On 29 April 2024, United Nations experts wrote an allegations letter to the governments of Namibia, Germany, and the United Kingdom, and to several companies, criticizing the planned extension of the seaport in Lüderitz that would endanger the national heritage site of Shark Island memorializing the 1904–1908 genocide, without the free, prior and informed consent of the Nama and Ovaherero Peoples who at the time had been the victims of the genocide. Forensic studies, conducted with the support of Nama Traditional Leaders Association (NTLA) and the Ovaherero Traditional Authority (OTA), had collected evidence near Lüderitz about the genocide, including on Shark Island, which was one of the most notorious concentration camps of the German colonial empire.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Henning Melber, “[Germany’s Genocide in Namibia: Deal between the Two Governments Falls Short of Delivering Justice](#),” *The Conversation* (7 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 271–272.

²¹⁰ Mandates of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, [AL GBR 10/2024](#) (12 September 2024).

NEPAL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007–2021, 2024.

In August 2024, parliament approved the Disappeared Persons' Enquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Amendment Act (also known as the transitional justice law) [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. It continued to contain serious accountability gaps, including definitions of crimes that did not comply with international standards, reductions in sentencing for serious crimes, and other provisions that could shield those responsible for wartime crimes from prosecution.²¹¹

NETHERLANDS

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 2004–2005, 2007–2024.

On 20 September 2024, the government returned 288 looted artifacts to Indonesia, in the second instance of repatriation since a 2020 government advisory committee report had recommended to return cultural objects stolen since the beginning of colonization in the early 1600s. The 2020 government report was praised for easing the burden of proof – as compared to similar restitution policies in Belgium and France [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*] – on researchers, for whom it was often difficult to provide archival evidence indicating the object's origins.²¹²

On 1 November 2024, Beatrice de Graaf (1976–), professor of history at Utrecht University and chairperson of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Defense, Safety and Security branch of the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Toegepast Natuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek (TNO; Dutch Organization for Applied Scientific Research), outlined in a newspaper interview the years-long and numerous sexist insults, humiliations, and threats made to her online as well as in person, mainly when speaking in the media as an expert on terrorism.²¹³

On 5 November 2024, journalist Sytze van der Zee (1939–2024) died. In a protracted lawsuit from 1990 to 1995, Louis van Gasteren (1923–), a member of the resistance during World War II and later a well-

²¹¹ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 330, 331–332; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 45, 273.

²¹² Lynsey Chutel, [“The Netherlands Returns Hundreds of Cultural Artifacts to Indonesia,”](#) *New York Times* (20 September 2024).

²¹³ Bart Funnekotter, [“Beatrice de Graaf: ‘Als je vertelt dat je wordt bedreigd, wordt dat ook nog tegen je gebruikt,’”](#) *NRC Handelsblad* (1 November 2024).

known filmmaker, had sued journalist Bart Middelburg (1956–) and van der Zee, chief editor of the daily newspaper *Het Parool* for defamation. Both were convicted and had to pay damages. In a series of articles for *Het Parool* in January and February 1990, Middelburg had written about the killing in May 1943 of a German Jew in hiding, Walter Oettinger, by Van Gasteren and cast doubts on the latter's version that the execution was carried out on orders of the resistance because Oettinger's provocative attitude and blackmail endangered Van Gasteren and other resistance members. Instead, Middelburg had suggested that the killing was a robbery with murder. Although in June 1944 Van Gasteren had been sentenced to four years in prison for the liquidation, he had been granted pardon in January 1946 in light of his former resistance activities and the fact that he had saved several Jewish lives. On 21 October 1998, the European Commission of Human Rights unanimously declared inadmissible Middelburg's application. It observed that he had not merely recalled Van Gasteren's conviction for manslaughter as a historical fact but also expressed doubts as to Van Gasteren's motives. It called "insufficiently substantiated" Middelburg's conclusion that the killing was not done in order to protect the resistance movement and by implication that it was a premeditated murder. The commission also noted that the Supreme Court held that Van Gasteren's right to have his reputation protected against disparagement in public weighed heavily in view of the fact that he had been convicted of the killing and had served part of the sentence imposed on him. Van Gasteren had also sued other authors who had written about the affair, such as Eric Slot and Pamela Hemelrijk.²¹⁴

On 23 November 2024, president of the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO; Dutch Research Council) Marcel Levi (1964–) attacked Nadia Bouras, a historian of immigration at Leiden University and secretary of the Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Genootschap (KNHG; Royal Netherlands Historical Society) in the newspaper *Het Parool*, saying that she denied the existence of antisemitism in the Netherlands in a 16 November 2024 column in the same newspaper, in which she had criticized the government for stigmatizing Muslims after recent ethnic violence in Amsterdam. Shortly before, journalist Wierd Duk had attacked Bouras in similar terms in a popular television program. Evaluating the case, journalist Sjoerd de Jong concluded that Levi and Duk had misinterpreted what Bouras had written and that she had not denied antisemitism [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*].²¹⁵

²¹⁴ European Commission of Human Rights, [As to the Admissibility of Application no. 28202/95 by Bart A. Middelburg, Sytze van der Zee and Het Parool b.v. against the Netherlands](#) (Strasbourg 21 October 1998).

²¹⁵ Nadia Bouras, "[De aanval op moslims is ingezet](#)," *Het Parool* (16 November 2024); Marcel Levi, "[Je ziet antisemitisme pas als je het doorhebt](#)," *Het Parool* (23 November 2024); Sjoerd de Jong, "[NWO-voorzitter schiet uit zijn slof als columnist en noemt Leidse migratiehistoricus 'antisemitisme-ontkenner'](#)," *NRC Handelsblad* (27 November 2024).

In 2025, a court declared a complaint filed by the Komite Utang Kehormatan Belanda – Stichting Comité Nederlandse Ereschulden (KUKB; Foundation Dutch Debt of Honor Committee) against the Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Genootschap (KNHG; Royal Netherlands Historical Society) alleging unfounded and defamatory statements in a press release about historian and independent researcher Anne-Lot Hoek (1978–) and requesting a rectification and fine inadmissible on procedural grounds [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].²¹⁶

On 19 April 2025, a protected graffiti mural of Holocaust victim Anne Frank (1929–1945), created in 2009 on a noise wall in Amersfoort, was vandalized.²¹⁷

In mid-June 2025, the Amsterdam Appeals Court ruled in the case of the Institute on Gender Equality and Women’s History Atria (established in 1935 under a previous name) against its former director Kaouthar Darmoni that her 2022 dismissal after anonymous complaints of sexual and other transgressive behavior had been unfair and ordered Atria to pay € 2000.000 for serious reputational damage. According to the court, Atria was “grossly culpable” in distributing Darmoni’s personal information, including to her ex-partner; using photographs secretly taken of her; unjustly accusing her of CV fraud and manipulation of a staff satisfaction survey; and demanding her to repay three years’ salary.²¹⁸

See also Burundi, Kosovo, Philippines, Romania, Suriname.

²¹⁶ KUKB, “[Press Release – Accusations KNHG](#)” (dated 1 February 2023; should be 2024); Histori Bersama, “[Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Genootschap \(Royal Dutch Historical Society, KNHG\) Falsely Accuses Histori Bersama of Intimidating Anne-Lot Hoek](#)” (8 February 2024); KUKB, “[Update KNHG: NRC Retracts Promise to Publish Reader’s Letter](#)” (press release; 17 March 2024); Jan Hein Furnée (KNHG President), Communication to KNHG General Assembly (19 June 2025); Antia Wiersma (KNHG Secretary), Personal communication (24 June 2025).

²¹⁷ Veerle Schyns, “[Gezicht van Amersfoortse muurschildering Anne Frank uitgewist](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (19 April 2025).

²¹⁸ Atria, “[Uitspraak hoger beroep in de zaak Darmoni – Atria](#)” (Press statement; 16 June 2025); Ashwant Nandram, “[Atria moet oud-directeur Kaouthar Darmoni 200 duizend euro betalen wegens ‘volkomen misplaatst’ ontslag](#),” *Volkskrant* (16 June 2025); Emma Vos, “[Atria handelde ‘zeer ernstig verwijtbaar’ bij ‘volkomen misplaatst’ ontslag oud-directeur Kaouthar Darmoni](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (18 June 2025). See also De Rechtspraak, Uitspraken: [ECLI:NL:RBAMS:2023:2917](#) (3 May 2023); [ECLI:NL:RBAMS:2023:2929](#) (4 May 2023); [ECLI:NL:RBAMS:2023:2930](#) (4 May 2023); [ECLI:NL:GHAMS:2023:1911](#) (8 August 2023).

NEW ZEALAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2017, 2019–2021, 2024.

On 24 July 2024, the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions, established in 2018, published *Whanaketia – Through Pain and Trauma, From Darkness to Light*, its final report on the abuse and neglect of children, young people, and adults in the care of the State and faith-based institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand between 1950 and 1999. It found that around 200,000 children, young people and vulnerable adults had suffered abuse, including electric shocks, rape and forced labor, in state and faith-based care institutions, the majority of whom came from historically marginalized communities, including Māori and Pacific people, or people with disabilities. The report recommended, among other things, public acknowledgement and apologies, reparations and access to information [See NCH *Annual Report* 2024].

On 20 November 2024, Poumanaaki Chief Archivist Anahera Morehu apologized to survivors of abuse in care institutions on behalf of the Te Rua Mahara o te Kwanatanga Archives New Zealand, previously known as the National Archives. Over the course of the inquiry, many survivors had detailed how institutional recordkeeping had been absent or inadequate, causing harm to them and their families as they were disconnected from their whānau (“extended family”) and culture, and as their identities were misrepresented or erased. Recordkeeping failures across many agencies also undermined action on complaints about abuse and the ability to identify the seriousness and size of system failures.²¹⁹

On 14 November 2024, three members of parliament of the opposition party Te Pāti Māori (Māori Party) – Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke, Rawiri Waititi, and Debbie Ngarewa-Packer – performed a traditional Haka dance during a session of the parliament to demonstrate against a controversial bill concerning Māori people’s rights, during which a copy of the bill was ripped in two. The bill aimed to undermine the way in which the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, a founding document crucial in upholding Māori rights, was interpreted. Following a nine-day peaceful protest later in 2024, the bill was voted down 112 votes to 11 in April 2025. On 15 May 2025, however, the three members of parliament were suspended (Maipi-Clarke for seven days, the others for 21 days) after a parliamentary committee argued that the Haka “could have intimidated” fellow members of parliament.²²⁰

²¹⁹ Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care, [website](#); “[New Zealand Inquiry Finds 200,000 Abused in State and Religious Care](#),” *Al Jazeera* (24 July 2024), Kathryn Armstrong & Joel Guinto, “[Almost One in Three People in NZ Care Was Abused](#),” *BBC News* (24 July 2024); “[Recommendations / Ngā Tūtohi](#),” *Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry* ([no date]); Archives New Zealand, “[Chief Archivist Apology to Survivors of Abuse in Care](#),” *Community - Scoop* (Press release; 20 November 2024).

²²⁰ Mackenzie Argent, “[Cultural Suspension: Māori MPs Face Suspension for Performing the Haka in Parliament](#),” *Index on Censorship* (16 May 2025); Kathryn Armstrong, “[New Zealand Rejects Rights Bill after](#)

On 4 March 2025, at an event in London, High Commissioner Phil Goff compared efforts to end the war between Russia and Ukraine since 2022 to the 1938 Munich Agreement, which allowed Adolf Hitler to annex part of Czechoslovakia. Recalling how British opposition leader Winston Churchill had criticized the agreement as a surrender to Nazi Germany's threats, Goff added: "President Trump has restored the bust of Churchill to the Oval Office. But do you think he really understands history?" Saying that Goff's comments were "deeply disappointing," Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Winston Peters dismissed him.²²¹

NICARAGUA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2020–2024.

On 6 November 2024, a United Nations Group of Experts reported that several teachers were forced to refer to the April 2018 protests from the perspective of the government and the views of the ruling political party Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN; Sandinista National Liberation Front; in power in 1979–1990 and 2007–present) during their classes; other views were reportedly censored. The group also documented the cancellation of the legal personality of the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica (IHNCA; Central American Historical Institute) [see *NCH Annual Report 2024*].²²²

NIGER

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2009, 2013, 2021.

In a ceremony in the capital Niamey on 16 October 2024, various name changes were marked after military leaders had ousted President Mohamed Bazoum in a coup on 26 July 2023. Avenue Charles de Gaulle was renamed Avenue Djibo Bakary in honor of Bakary (1922–1998) who had played a key role in Niger's struggle for independence (1958–1960); a war memorial built to remember those who died in the two World Wars was now to pay "homage to all civilian and military victims of colonization to

[Widespread Outrage](#)," *BBC News* (10 April 2025); Charlotte Graham-McLay, "[New Zealand MPs Suspended for Performing Haka in Parliament](#)," *Independent* (14 May 2025).

²²¹ Kelly Ng, "[NZ Fires Envoy to UK Who Questioned Trump's Grasp of History](#)," *BBC News* (6 March 2025).

²²² Grupo de Expertos en Derechos Humanos sobre Nicaragua, [Violaciones y abusos de los derechos humanos a la educación, la libertad académica y otros derechos fundamentales contra estudiantes, docentes, directivos académicos y otro personal universitario](#) (UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.6) (6 November 2024), §§184, 213, 228.

the present day”; an engraving of French colonial officer and explorer Parfait-Louis Monteil (1855–1925) on a stone monument was replaced by a plaque with a portrait of Burkina Faso’s revolutionary leader Thomas Sankara (1949–1987); and Niamey’s Place de la Francophonie was renamed Place de l’Alliance des États du Sahel, after Niger’s new confederation with Burkina Faso and Mali.²²³

NIGERIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2006, 2008, 2010–2013, 2016–2024.

On 10 July 2024, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Community Court of Justice in Abuja issued its ruling in *Obianuju Catherine Udeh and Two Others v. Federal Republic of Nigeria*. It found that the authorities had violated protesters’ rights at the 2020 #EndSARS protests, in which people across the country demanded the dissolution of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) – a police unit formed to combat armed robbery and other serious crimes set up in 1992 in Lagos that had been implicated in human rights violations across the country [See NCH *Annual Report 2022–2023*]. However, it failed to hold authorities accountable for the killing of twelve protesters in October 2020, at Lekki toll gate and in the district of Alausa, Lagos state.²²⁴

On 17 October 2024, the Lagos State Government opened a judicial inquiry into the death of history student Pelumi Onifade (2000–2020) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2024*]. The inquiry followed a 19 July 2024 ruling by the Federal High Court in Lagos ordering a full investigation into the circumstances of Onifade’s death.²²⁵

On [7] January 2025, Mubarak Bala ([1984]–), President of the Humanist Association of Nigeria, sentenced to 24 years in prison on blasphemy charges, was released early after a 2024 appeals court judge found his sentence excessive. He remained in a safe house because he still feared for his life [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*].²²⁶

See also Brazil.

²²³ Paul Njie & Lucy Fleming, “[Niger Drops French Place Names to Honour Local Heroes](#),” *BBC News* (16 October 2024).

²²⁴ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 282.

²²⁵ Itoro Etukudo, “[#EndSARS: Lagos Launches Judicial Inquiry into Journalist Pelumi’s Death](#),” *International Center for Investigative Reporting* (18 October 2024).

²²⁶ Yemisi Adegoke, “[Nigerian Atheist Freed from Prison but Fears for His Life](#),” *BBC News* (7 January 2025).

NORTH MACEDONIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2021–2024. For previous entries: *see* Macedonia.

In late August 2024, Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski announced the replacement of the Macedonian members of the Multidisciplinary Commission for Historical and Educational Issues – which had been formed in 2017 between North Macedonia and Bulgaria to find common ground on disputed historical events and figures, to recommend changes to history textbooks and to suggest possible shared historically-significant holidays – because of their failure to “meet expectations” and “protect national interests.” In response, the commission members offered their resignation. Bilateral relations, already severely worsened since the 2020 so-called “historical dispute” in which Bulgaria blocked North Macedonia’s European Union accession talks and claimed that the Macedonian language and identity had a Bulgarian origin [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2023*], further deteriorated when in July 2024, Mickoski’s right-wing conservative Внатрешна македонска револуционерна организација – Демократска партија за македонско национално единство (VMRO-DPMNE; Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity) won the elections.²²⁷

NORWAY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2009, 2012, 2016–2017, 2022–2023.

See Denmark.

²²⁷ Sinisa Jakov Marusic, “[PM’s Attack on North Macedonia-Bulgaria ‘History Commission’ Members Condemned](#),” *Balkan Insight* (4 September 2024).

OMAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2024.

Throughout 2024, authorities imposed strict surveillance on public gatherings. In several cases, individuals were summoned and investigated for participating in or organizing discussions about historical, political or human rights-related topics. Furthermore, authorities issued strict directives prohibiting cafes and public venues from hosting or allowing any such discussions. Commemorations, including of the 2011 Omani protests [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*], were restricted under Royal Decree No. 2011/96, which imposed penalties or imprisonment ranging from one month to one year along with a financial fine. A 2018 Penal Code revision had defined permitted public gatherings as pro-government demonstrations (commonly referred to as “Loyalty and Gratitude Marches”), celebrations for occasions related to Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said (1940–2020; sultan between 1970–2020), or sporting events.²²⁸

Among the books banned from the February–March 2024 annual Muscat Book Fair [See NCH *Annual Reports 2010, 2017, 2021*] was *قصة شعبنا والثورة* (“Our People’s Story and the Revolution”) by Noor Al Shuhri, a historical fiction about the Dhofar Rebellion (1963–1976), in which the Marxist-Leninist Dhofar Liberation Front fought against the Al Bu Said dynasty (the ruling dynasty of what is Oman since 1744) and the British presence in Oman.²²⁹

²²⁸ The Omani Center for Human Rights and Democracy, [Human Rights in Oman 2024](#) (London: OCHRD, 2025), 43, 54.

²²⁹ The Omani Center for Human Rights and Democracy, [Human Rights in Oman 2024](#) (London: OCHRD, 2025), 76.

PAKISTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009–2012, 2014, 2016, 2018–2019, 2021, 2023–2024.

In March 2024, a Pakistani historian (name kept anonymous to protect his identity) working at a Pakistani university since 2010, was kidnapped outside his home and interrogated and tortured in an unknown location for several hours by State actors. During the interrogation, he was accused of hiding information, most likely a reference to a European Union–funded research project in which he participated. Severely injured, he was eventually “released” on a remote road, while death threats were shouted at him. The historian also belonged to the persecuted Shia community in Pakistan. In June 2024, State actors threatened his parents to provide information about him. In August 2024, he obtained a visa to temporarily leave Pakistan but he was held at the airport and only released after several hours of interrogation by uniformed airport staff. He was specialized in the history of the Sikh Empire (1799–1849), including Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780–1839), and in the history of Partition and post-Partition Pakistan, in particular Punjab, and the 1947 refugee crisis, among others. He went into exile in Europe, where he had short-term positions at the Universities of Bath (United Kingdom) and Dortmund (Germany).²³⁰

On 18 September 2024, Shah Nawaz ([1987/8]–2024), a doctor in Sindh Province, was killed by police officers after he had voluntarily surrendered himself in an attempt to avoid a lynch mob that had accused him of “desecrating” the prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632) in a Facebook post. Nawaz had denied that he had uploaded the post. After a cleric had filed a complaint over it, Nawaz had lost his job and gone into hiding. Later another cleric announced a US\$ 18,000 bounty on his head. His family was denied burial at a graveyard and when they tried to bury his body on private land a mob armed with weapons and Molotov cocktails seized the body and set it on fire. According to the Center for Social Justice, a minority rights group in Lahore, eight people accused of blasphemy had already been killed extrajudicially as of September 2024 – the same number as in the whole of 2023. It also reported that throughout 2023, 330 people, the majority of which were Muslims, had been charged with blasphemy. The same year, the government had passed a law to increase punishment for derogatory remarks against “revered personalities,” including the Prophet Muhammad, his family, wives, and companions, and the

²³⁰ International Scholars Rescue Fund case sheet (no year [2024]); Doreen Pastor, personal communications (6–8 January 2025); [Network of Concerned Historians campaign](#) (8 January 2025).

Rashidun (“Rightly Guided”; the first four caliphs reigning between 632–661 CE), from three up to at least ten years in prison.²³¹

See also Bangladesh, India.

PALESTINE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998–2002, 2008–2010, 2013–2015, 2018, 2021–2024.

In May 2023, the Government of Israel allocated 32 million new Israeli shekels (approximately US\$ 8.9 million) to develop an archaeological site in Sabastiya (Sebastia), Nablus, on the Occupied West Bank. The site (also known as Samaria, the capital of the biblical Kingdom of Israel in the eighth and ninth centuries BCE), included artefacts from the Iron Age, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader, and Islamic periods. The planned development would cut off Palestinians from the site – many of whom had been involved for years in renovating and preserving historical artefacts and managing tourism and education activities at the site – and would focus exclusively on Jewish history. On 29 December 2024, the Palestinian branch of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) issued a report detailing how the site was facing “severe and escalating threats.”²³²

Among those killed during the Israel-Gaza war since 7 October 2023 were the following [See *NCH Annual Report 2024* for a related list]:

- On 6 November 2023, Shahadah al-Buhbahan ([1949/50]–2023), a poet, teacher and researcher focused on the Palestinian struggle for independence and on Islamic history and heritage, was killed in an Israeli airstrike along with this wife, grandchild and extended family.²³³
- On 7 December 2023, Do’a Al-Masri (?–2023), librarian at the Edward Said library in Beit Lahia City, Gaza, was killed by Israeli forces.²³⁴

The destruction of cultural heritage sites by Israeli forces in Gaza continued throughout 2024 and 2025 [See *NCH Annual Report 2024* for a related list]:

²³¹ Zia ur-Rehman, “[First It Was Lynch Mobs: Now Police Kill Pakistanis Accused of Blasphemy](#),” *New York Times* (26 September 2024).

²³² ICOMOS Palestine, [Heritage Alert: The Archaeological Site of Sebastia](#) (29 December 2024); [Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel](#) (A/HRC/59/26) (6 May 2025), 11.

²³³ PEN International, [War on Writers: A Look at Writers Killed in Gaza](#) (6 December 2024).

²³⁴ Dan Sheehan, “[Israel Has Destroyed or Damaged At Least 13 Libraries in Gaza](#),” *Literary Hub* (6 February 2024).

- On 15 March 2024, the Gaza media office claimed that Israeli forces had destroyed 223 mosques and 3 churches completely and 289 mosques partially since the 7 October Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing Gaza-Israel War (2023–). As of 8 April 2025, UNESCO had verified 102 damaged or destroyed cultural heritage sites in Gaza since 7 October 2023, among them archaeological areas, monuments, and buildings of historical and artistic interest.²³⁵
- In [August] 2024, videos emerged of an American Israeli soldier of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), showing the demolition of a mosque on 10 December 2023 alongside extensive destruction of property, drawing accusations of war crimes.²³⁶
- On 6 October 2024, an Israeli airstrike severely damaged the Shuhada al-Aqsa Mosque in Deir el-Balah.²³⁷

Throughout 2024, Hamas authorities continued to consistently fail to conduct investigations into serious violations of international law, including possible war crimes. Arrest warrants were issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC)'s Pre-Trial Chamber on 21 November 2024 against Al-Qassam Brigades leader Mohammed Diab Ibrahim al-Masri (also known as Mohammed Deif), as well as Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Deif was killed on 13 July 2024.²³⁸

On 1 February 2024, a report by the Librarians and Archivists with Palestine found that one archive, nine libraries, four university libraries, and eight museums had been looted, damaged and/or destroyed by Israeli forces since 7 October 2023. Ramallah-based historian Hossam Abu Nasser estimated that seventy percent of the Gaza Strip archives had been destroyed as of July 2024. Director of public relations and media at Gaza Municipality, Asim Al Nabih, further alleged that Israeli forces particularly targeted archives containing records of land and property for looting to prevent Palestinians from claiming ownership after the war. On 18 April 2024, twenty-five United Nations experts expressed grave concern over the attacks on educational institutions, teachers and students, and suggested that "it may be reasonable to ask if there is an intentional effort to comprehensively destroy the Palestinian education system, an action known as 'scholasticide'." A 14 February 2025 report by UNICEF, Education Cluster and Save the Children found that approximately 95% of school buildings in Gaza

²³⁵ M. Z. Adnan, "[Looted, Destroyed and Erased: Archivists around the World Struggle to Save Palestinian Histories](#)," *Hyphen* (8 October 2024); "[Gaza Strip: Damage Assessment](#)," *UNESCO* (9 April 2025).

²³⁶ "[In Gaza, Palestinians Hold Ramadan Prayers by Ruins of Mosque](#)," *Reuters* (15 March 2024); Alice Speri, "[US-Israeli Soldier Posted Videos Showing Detonation of Gaza Homes and Mosque](#)," *Guardian* (3 August 2024).

²³⁷ "[Israel Kills 26 in Attack on Gaza Mosque, School; Orders More Evacuations](#)," *Al Jazeera* (6 October 2024).

²³⁸ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 293.

had been damaged or destroyed. Some spoke of “historicide,” understood as “the attempted elimination of the possibility of future historical work.”²³⁹

On 22 July 2024, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) announced the death of Holocaust historian Alex Danzig (Alex Dancyg; 1948–2024) in Hamas captivity. On 7 October 2023, during the attack on Israel by the al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement), Danzig was abducted and taken as a hostage to an unknown destination in the Gaza Strip, where he gave history lectures to other hostages [See NCH *Annual Reports 2023–2024*]. On 20 August 2024, Danzig’s body and the bodies of five other hostages were recovered by Israeli soldiers during an overnight operation from tunnels under Khan Younis, southern Gaza.²⁴⁰

A 6 May 2025 report by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (established by the United Nations Human Rights Council in May 2021), found an increase of attacks against and seizures of cultural and religious heritage sites in the Occupied West Bank and Occupied East Jerusalem since 7 October 2023 by Israeli forces and settlers:

- On 22 October 2023, an Israeli airstrike severely damaged the Al-Ansar Mosque in Jenin.
- In June 2024, the Israeli government established a Jewish settlement (illegal under international law) within the Battir ancient terraces – a cultural heritage site featured on the UNESCO World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger. Already in 2022 and 2023, the government had allowed settlers to establish so-called “outposts” within the heritage site.

²³⁹ Librarians and Archivists with Palestine, [Israeli Damage to Archives, Libraries, and Museums in Gaza, October 2023–January 2024: A Preliminary Report from Librarians and Archivists with Palestine](#) (1 February 2024); Dan Sheehan, [“Israel Has Destroyed or Damaged At Least 13 Libraries in Gaza,”](#) *Literary Hub* (6 February 2024); United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, [“UN Experts Deeply Concerned over ‘Scholasticide’ in Gaza”](#) (press release; 18 April 2024); Nagham Mohanna, [“‘Systematic Targeting’: Israel War Ravages Gaza’s Archives and Manuscripts,”](#) *The National* (6 July 2024); M. Z. Adnan, [“Looted, Destroyed and Erased: Archivists Around the World Struggle to Save Palestinian Histories,”](#) *Hyphen* (8 October 2024); Pilar Montero Vilar, [“Destruction of Gaza Heritage Sites Aims to Erase – and Replace – Palestine’s History,”](#) *The Conversation* (9 October 2024); Occupied Palestinian Territories Education Cluster, [The State of Education in Gaza and the West Bank: “Current Realities and Future Priorities”](#) (14 February 2025); [Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and Israel](#) (A/HRC/59/26) (6 May 2025); United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, [Allegations Letter AL ISR 24/2024](#) (3 January 2025); Lydia Wilson, [“Historicide in Gaza: Israel’s Destruction of Official and Personal Archives Is Changing how Palestine’s Story Can Be Told,”](#) *New Lines Magazine* (27 June 2025).

²⁴⁰ [“IDF Announces Death of Hamas Hostage Alex Dancyg in Captivity,”](#) *Times of Israel* (22 July 2024); Bethan McKernan, [“Israel Says Bodies of Six Hostages Have Been Recovered from Gaza,”](#) *Guardian* (20 August 2024).

- In December 2024, the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the removal of Jewish settlements in the Nabi-Aner springs, located west of Ramallah. The springs had been a pilgrimage and prayer site for Palestinians, before settlers backed by Israeli security forces took over the area and marketed it as a tourist destination.
- On 2 February 2025, settlers burned a mosque in the Bedouin village of Al-Mu'arrajat, near Jericho, as part of a series of settler attacks on religious and educational facilities in Al-Mu'arrajat.
- The report also found that a rocket by Palestinian armed groups had hit a museum in Kibbutz Yad Mordechai in South Israel on 23 October 2023.²⁴¹

See also Algeria, Cuba, Germany, India, Israel, Poland, Saudi Arabia, United States.

PANAMA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2003, 2008, 2013, 2015–2017.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2014, 2023.

PARAGUAY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002–2005, 2007, 2009–2010, 2012, 2015, 2020, 2022.

PERU

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2024.

On 4 July 2024, Parliament passed a bill that barred prosecution for imprescriptible crimes covered by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court that were committed before 2002 (when the statute came into effect). If becoming law, the bill would terminate 600 ongoing investigations into crimes

²⁴¹ [Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and Israel](#) (A/HRC/59/26) (6 May 2025), 10–13.

committed during the civil war (1980–2000). On 29 April 2024, United Nations Special Rapporteurs had written an allegations letter to the government criticizing the bill as “in patent contradiction with the rule of law” and “encourag[ing] impunity.” Their letter had further condemned threats against the “El Ojo que Llorá” (The Eye that Cries) memorial in Lima, including a request to demolish it, threats to destroy it, and intimidation of those supporting it. In mid-June 2024, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights had called for the suspension of the bill’s legislative proceedings. The bill became Law 32107 in August 2024, after President Dina Boluarte (in office since 2022) did not use her right to veto the bill. Law 32107 violated various obligations under international law, including the 1968 Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity.²⁴²

On 11 September 2024, former President Alberto Fujimori (in office 1990–2000) died [See NCH *Annual Reports 2002–2021, 2024*]. In 2009, Fujimori had been sentenced to 25 years in prison for corruption and crimes against humanity committed during the armed conflict (1980–2000), in which an estimated 70,000 people were killed or subject to enforced disappearance by the Shining Path, other armed groups, or state agents according to a 2003 Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Additionally, Fujimori’s administration oversaw a forced sterilization campaign in which over 350,000 women and 25,000 men were sterilized against their will as part of a plan to reduce the birth rate in rural and indigenous communities. He died at his daughter’s house, after a December 2023 Constitutional Tribunal ruling had released him from prison, where he was serving his sentence, in violation of orders from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].²⁴³

On 19 January 2025, a statue of the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro (1478–1541) was reinstalled during a ceremony marking the 490th anniversary of the 1535 founding of the capital Lima after he and his troops defeated the Inca Empire and claimed their lands for the Spanish crown. The statue had been offered to Lima by the widow of sculptor Charles Rumsey to commemorate Lima’s fourth centenary in 1935, but in 2003, it had been moved to a park next to train tracks outside Lima’s center following calls for its removal. Indigenous leaders said that Pizarro was a mass murderer who destroyed their culture, while those supporting the statue’s return said Peru should not erase its history.²⁴⁴

²⁴² UN Special Rapporteurs, [AL PER 3/2024](#) (29 April 2024) and [government response](#) (28 June 2024); “[Le parlement proscriit les poursuites pour crimes contre l’humanité commis avant 2002](#),” *La Presse* (4 July 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 360–361; Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 36, 298.

²⁴³ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 360–361.

²⁴⁴ Aoife Walsh, “[Statue of Spanish Conquistador Reinstalled in Central Lima](#),” *BBC News* (19 January 2025).

PHILIPPINES

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2011–2015, 2019–2024.

On 9 May 2022, Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. was elected President after a campaign marred by historical revisionism related to the administration of his father Ferdinand Marcos (in office between 1965–1986) and particularly the period of Martial Law (1972–1986) during which at least 11,000 people had become victims of summary execution, torture, and other human rights violations [See *NCH Annual Report 2022*]. After the election, historians addressing this historical revisionism were harassed online and some books outlining crimes committed during the Marcos dictatorship were labeled as “subversive” [See *NCH Annual Report 2023*].

Marcos Jr. further tried to influence history education and public commemorations. On 11 September 2023, the Department of Education confirmed a proposal to remove references to Diktadurang Marcos (Marcos Dictatorship) in Grade 6 textbooks and change them to Diktadura (Dictatorship). The proposal was criticized by House Deputy Minority leader France Castro as a “clear revision of history and an insult to the countless victims of human rights abuses.” The Department of Education denied facing pressure from the president to pass the proposal. On 13 October 2023, Marcos Jr. removed the 25 February commemoration of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution, during which popular protests overthrew the Marcos government, from the list of annual public holidays.²⁴⁵

On 11 March 2025, former President Rodrigo Duterte (in office between 2016–2022) was taken into custody and sent to The Hague, the Netherlands, after the International Criminal Court (ICC) had issued an arrest warrant. He faced charges of crimes against humanity for his responsibility as mayor of Davao City between 2011 and 2016, and as president overseeing the so-called “War on Drugs” between 2016 and 2019 (when the Philippines withdrew from the ICC Rome Statute). It was estimated that between 12,000–30,000 had been killed as part of this “War on Drugs.”²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Zacarian Sarao, “[DepEd Confirms Receiving Proposal to Remove Marcos in ‘Diktadurang Marcos’](#),” *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (11 September 2023); Julie Aurelio, Krixia Subingsubing & Nestor Corrales, “[Bongbong Marcos Removes Edsa People Power Anniversary from List of Holidays](#),” *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (14 October 2023); John Eric Mendoza, “[Marcos Says Not His Duty to Apologize for Martial Law Atrocities](#),” *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (15 April 2024); Julia Tyronne Simangan & Julia Uy, “[Archiving Martial Law](#),” *The Guidon* (22 September 2024); Jean Mangaluz, “[Is Marcos Trying to Erase ‘People Power’? Palace Says ‘President Can’t Erase History’](#),” *Philstar* (25 February 2025).

²⁴⁶ Rebecca Ratcliffe, “[Duterte Flown to The Hague after Arrest over Philippines Drug War Killings](#),” *Guardian* (11 March 2025).

POLAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–1998, 2000–2001, 2004–2005, 2007–2011, 2014–2024.

On 9 January 2025, the government adopted a resolution enabling senior Israeli officials to participate in events commemorating the eightieth anniversary of the 1945 Auschwitz concentration camp's liberation on 27 January 2025. The resolution enabled welcoming Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to attend the commemoration, despite him being wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the war in Gaza, contradicting Poland's legal obligation as an ICC member to comply with all ICC arrest warrants. The decision was widely criticized. Previously, France had announced that it believed Netanyahu enjoyed immunity from arrest under article 98 ("Cooperation with respect to waiver of immunity and consent to surrender") of the 1998 Rome Statute (an interpretation rejected by the ICC and many human rights organizations).²⁴⁷

See also Belarus, Guyana, Russia, Ukraine.

PORTUGAL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2017, 2021.

On 15 May 2024, parliament rejected a proposal by the far-right Chega party to charge President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa with "treason against the Fatherland," after the latter had publicly declared in 2023 that Portugal had to assume responsibility for atrocities committed during the colonial era, and had suggested reparations in 2024. The proposal for reparations had previously been rejected by most parties, including those in government. During the debate in parliament, Chega's president André Ventura, who had previously blamed "the Left" repeatedly for "rewriting national history and calling all our ancestors criminals," called de Sousa's comments a betrayal of history and "humiliating" to Portuguese ancestors.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch, "[Poland Should Commit to Its ICC Obligations](#)" (press release; New York: HRW, 15 January 2025); "[France Says 'Immunities Apply' to Netanyahu Regarding ICC Arrest Warrant](#)," *Le Monde* (27 November 2024).

²⁴⁸ Salma ben Mariem, "[Portugal Parliament Dismisses Bid to Charge President with Treason over Support for Slavery Reparations to Former Colonies](#)," *Jurist News* (16 May 2024); [Report on Heritage Practices Concerning Far-Right Movements](#), *SolRem* (28 December 2024).

QATAR

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010.

See India.

ROMANIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007–2008, 2010, 2019, 2021–2024.

On 23 April 2024, in the case of *Zăicescu and Fălticineanu v. Romania*, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) found that the State had discriminated against two Jewish plaintiffs, both Holocaust survivors, in a late 1990s retrial of two high-ranking military officials on charges of war crimes related to their involvement in the 1941 Iași pogrom and in the ghettoization of Jews throughout the war. After the death of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918–1989; in power between 1965–1989) and the dissolution of the Socialist Republic of Romania (1965–1989), the Supreme Court of Justice had reopened several war crimes judgments issued during the Communist regime. In the case against R.D. and G.P. (both of whom were deceased at this point), the court ruled at the time that military officials had only complied with orders and had had no involvement in the massacres of Jews, which had solely been carried out by Nazi-German troops, and subsequently acquitted both.

The ECtHR ruling stated that “the findings of the Supreme Court of Justice – specifically that only German troops had carried out on the territory of Romania actions against Jews and that R.D. had only followed orders issued by a superior – in the acquittal decisions of 1998 and 1999 had been excuses or efforts to blur responsibility and put blame on another nation for the Holocaust contrary to well established historical facts – all elements of Holocaust denial and distortion.” It further said that by failing to inform the plaintiffs and the wider public of extraordinary appeal proceedings and by denying them access to the proceedings and files, the State had caused “emotional suffering” and breached the plaintiffs’ rights to private life and psychological integrity.²⁴⁹

In the lead-up to the first-round of the presidential election on 25 November 2024, far-right candidate Călin Georgescu praised Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (1899–1938), the founder and leader of the Fascist and antisemitic Legion of the Archangel Michael (also known as Iron Guard), and wartime dictator Ion Antonescu (1882–1946), who was sentenced to death in 1946 for war crimes and Nazi collaboration, as national heroes. Georgescu won the first round, but the results were later annulled by the constitutional court on charges of Russian election interference.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ European Court of Human Rights, [Case of Zăicescu and Fălticineanu v. Romania](#) (42917/16) (23 April 2024); Irina Mirica, “[European Human Rights Court Condemns Romania over Holocaust Crimes Retrials](#),” *Romania-Insider* (24 April 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 309.

²⁵⁰ Luiza Ilie, “[Who Is Calin Georgescu, Romania’s Surprise Hard-Right Presidential Candidate?](#),” *Reuters* (24 November 2024); Sarah Rainsford, “[Romanian Court Annuls Result of Presidential Election First Round](#),” *BBC News* (6 December 2024).

On 28 January 2025, Culture Minister Natalia Intotero dismissed historian and numismatist Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu (1951–), the general director (2010–2025) of the National History Museum (MNIR), after he refused to resign following the theft of Dacian artifacts from an exhibition at the Drents Museum in Assen, the Netherlands, three days prior. In an official reaction, Oberländer-Târnoveanu said that “[n]o violation of the law or applicable regulations was indicated to me. Instead, false pretexts were found to justify my resignation, and various means were used to try to intimidate me,” adding that he refused to leave as this would impact the efforts to recover the stolen treasures.²⁵¹

RUSSIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–1998, 2001, 2004–2006, 2008–2024.

Among the historians who went into exile after the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2024* for related lists] was the following:

- Historian, sociologist, ethnologist, and human rights scholar and activist Dmitry Dubrovsky [Dubrovskiy]. On the first day of the so-called “special operation,” his contract at the department of politics and management of the Higher School of Economics in Moscow was not renewed. He went into exile and became a research fellow at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, and a professor at the Brīvā universitāte, Latvia.²⁵²

On 18 January 2024, security forces searched the home of historian and journalist Vyacheslav Yashchenko, seizing a laptop and other electronic devices, as part of an investigation into activist Yevgeny Kochegin, former coordinator of the headquarters of opposition politician Alexey Navalny in Volgograd and leader of the regional anti-war movement Dozor, who was accused of spreading “fake news” about the actions of the Russian army in Ukraine.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Irina Marica, “[Romanian History Museum Director Dismissed after Dutch Exhibition Theft](#),” *Romania-Insider.com* (29 January 2025).

²⁵² Anthony Zhezmer, “[Dmitry Dubrovsky: ‘My Dismissal Is a Triumph for the Closed, Non-transparent System’](#),” *Rights in Russia* (16 May 2022); “[Dmitry Dubrovsky: ‘Our Classes Are an Opportunity To Be a Little Free in an Already Unfree Country’](#),” *T-Invariant* (17 September 2024); Julia Mierau, ed., *Academic Freedom in Russia: State Repression and Its Influence on Academic Practice* (Berlin: Science at Risk Emergency Office, 2024), 2; Alyona Lobankova, “[My Own Classmates Turned Me In](#): How Russian Universities Are Cracking Down on Anti-war Activists,” *The Insider* (4 January 2025).

²⁵³ International Press Institute, “[Home of Journalist Searched as Part of Investigation into “Fake News” on the War in Ukraine](#)” (alert) (Vienna: IPI, 18 January 2024).

In April 2024, historian Alexander Skobov ([1958–]), who regularly wrote opinion pieces online, was arrested. A Soviet-era dissident who was forcibly confined in a psychiatric hospital for six years in the 1970s and 1980s, he was imprisoned for his writings on Telegram about the 8 October 2022 Crimean Bridge explosion (when Ukrainian forces exploded a truck to disrupt infrastructure between Russia and Occupied Crimea). In March 2025, a military court sentenced him to sixteen years in prison for “justifying terrorism” and “being a member of a terrorist organization.”²⁵⁴

On 4 April 2024, Aleksandr Chernyshov, director of the Perm Center for Historical Memory – the legal successor of the Perm regional office of Memorial, which had been forcibly dissolved in 2022 after allegations of being a structural subdivision of International Memorial (which had been liquidated by the Supreme Court in December 2021 [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*]) –, was given a three-year suspended sentence on charges of attempting to steal cultural treasures and to “take Memorial documents that represent cultural and historical value from Russia to Germany.” The court further declared the center’s former director Robert Latypov (in exile) wanted on the same charges. On 11 March 2023, anti-extremism officers had interrogated Chernyshov and confiscated all his electronic devices. On 5 May 2023, he had been stopped at Sheremetyevo airport and imprisoned for fifteen days on a charge of petty hooliganism, after which he was remanded in custody.

Chernyshov’s case was part of a broader campaign of pressure on the Perm Center. On 11 March 2023, one of its volunteers was detained by police officers from the anti-extremism department and taken away for an interrogation. The officers were interested in the dispatch of the Perm Memorial archive to Moscow for safekeeping after the organization’s 2022 dissolution. In a trial, she was fined 3,000 rubles. After the trial, police confiscated her personal data storage devices, as well as anything connected to Memorial, including Books of Memory. On 12 May 2023, a search was conducted at the center itself. And one week later, on 19 May, searches were conducted at the homes of human rights activists and local Memorial members in Perm, including Tatyana Margolina, Svetlana Makovetskaya, and Igor Averkiev, and of the center’s board members Vera Sedinina, Tatyana Cherepanova, and Nadezhda Agisheva.²⁵⁵

Between 2020 and June 2024, Russia accounted for more than sixty percent of takedown requests to internet company Google. Among the removals made at the behest of government agency Roskomnadzor were certain posts on Google’s blogger platform, which “included criticism of Russian military history and policy, and Russian patriotic holidays.” Footage of Ukrainian protesters burning a

²⁵⁴ PEN America, [Freedom to Write Index 2024](#) (London: PEN, 24 April 2025).

²⁵⁵ Memorial, [Political Prisoners and Political Repression in Russia in 2023](#) (Moscow: Memorial, 2024), 136–137, 209.

Russian flag and of people insulting Russian state symbols on Google's YouTube was also taken down.²⁵⁶

In July 2024, Sergei Rjabchikov [Riabchikov], a historian and ethnographer from Krasnodar, Russia, specialized in ancient civilizations and Pacific studies, was detained for two days and summoned to court on charges of discrediting the Russian army (for criticizing the invasion of Ukraine on digital platform VKontakte) and using Nazi symbols (for posting a photo of Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov [1890–1986] in Berlin with several Nazi leaders in 1939). He was fined 30,000 roubles. On 13 October 2024, Rjabchikov fled from Russia but on his way from Yerevan, Armenia, to Belgrade, Serbia, he was returned to Yerevan. He was in bad health.²⁵⁷

On 5 August 2024, the annual commemoration at the Sandarmokh mass grave, containing the remains of 6,241 prisoners who were shot during the Great Terror (1936–1938), was held despite the intimidating presence of a group of people dressed in military Cossack uniforms and wearing Saint George's ribbons (a military symbol) who were playing military Soviet songs. Activist Andriy Litvin and blogger Alexey Trunov were arrested before the commemoration. Trunov was released the same evening, after his phone and laptop had been seized. The whereabouts of Litvin were unknown [See NCH *Annual Reports 2018–2022*].²⁵⁸

On 10 September 2024, a court in St. Petersburg fined journalist and historian Maksim Kuzakhmetov on the grounds that he did not respect his obligations as a “foreign agent,” including adding disclaimers on “foreign agent” status to all his publications and submitting regular activity and financial reports to the authorities. Kuzakhmetov confirmed that he had not respected these obligations, and did not plan to, as he considered them to be “degrading.”

On 2 June 2023, the Ministry of Justice had designated Kuzakhmetov as a “foreign agent,” accusing him of opposition against Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and claiming that he was an “ideologist” working for Free Ingria, a movement advocating for the autonomy or independence of the region of St. Petersburg from Russia.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁶ Siân Boyle, “[Revealed: Google Facilitated Russia and China's Censorship Requests](#),” *Guardian* (15 February 2025).

²⁵⁷ Personal communications from Sergei Rjabchikov, Marja van Tilburg, Toon van Meijl, Ian Conrich, and Wim Coudenys (October–November 2024).

²⁵⁸ “[Поминальной акции в Сандармохе не смогли помешать ни казаки, ни полицейские](#),” *BBC News* (5 August 2024).

²⁵⁹ International Press Institute, “[Journalist and Historian Maksim Kuzakhmetov Designated As Foreign Agent](#)” (alert) (Vienna: IPI, 2 June 2023); International Press Institute, “[Maksim Kuzakhmetov Fined on 'Foreign Agent' Grounds](#)” (alert) (Vienna: IPI, 10 September 2024).

On 19 September 2024, the newspaper *Kommersant* reported that between 2022 and 2024 the General Prosecutor's Office had reviewed more than 14,000 decisions that exonerated victims of Soviet-era political repression under the 1991 rehabilitation law and revoked those of more than 4,000 individuals. The review claimed to have uncovered "SS soldiers, members of occupation administrations, executioners, and [Nazi] collaborators" among those previously exonerated. An unnamed representative of human rights organization Memorial said that the number of revocations was exceptionally high but that it was impossible to verify the office's conclusions as access to the case files was closed once a rehabilitation decision had been overturned.²⁶⁰

In October 2024, it was reported that indoctrination lessons called "Conversations about important things," introduced in schools in 2022 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2023*], would be extended to kindergartens. Topics for such classes included the promotion of so-called "traditional values" and the glorification of Russia's war against Ukraine.²⁶¹

On 13 November 2024, the Gulag Museum, a museum dedicated to the history of mass repression in the Soviet Union (1917–1991), was closed in Moscow, officially due to "fire safety violations." However, the closure happened after a "strong recommendation" from the Kremlin and the security service FSB following the museum's Prayer of Remembrance event dedicated to preserving the names of victims of Stalinist repressions on 30 October 2024. That event took place in the museum's courtyard after authorities had refused to authorize an annual public gathering for the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Political Repressions for the fifth time, ostensibly because of Covid-19 restrictions. Established in 2001, the museum was awarded the Council of Europe Museum Prize in 2021.²⁶²

On 28 December 2024, the Prosecutor's Office initiated a criminal case against historian and history teacher Karpenko ([1987]–) (first name unknown) from Tikhoretsk, Krasnodar, in Krasnodar's Regional Court on charges of rehabilitation of Nazism [See NCH *Annual Reports 2009–2010, 2014, 2017, 2022–2023*] because in June 2021 he had sent a book review to the historical journal *Internauka* in which he criticized war veterans and the Soviet leadership during World War II, and attacked the author's views and use of sources, allegedly using disparaging terminology. It was published in August

²⁶⁰ ["Russia Revokes Rehabilitations of 4,000 Soviet-Era Victims of Political Repression, Restoring Their Status As 'Traitors to the Motherland',"](#) *The Insider* (19 September 2024).

²⁶¹ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 313.

²⁶² Gulag History Museum, [website](#); Kirill Zykov & Moskva News Agency, ["Moscow's Gulag History Museum Shuttters Over Fire Safety Violations,"](#) *Moscow Times* (14 November 2024); ["Kremlin and FSB Order Gulag Museum's Closure in Latest Crackdown on Historical Memory,"](#) *Moscow Times* (14 November 2024); Pjotr Sauer, ["Gulag History Museum in Moscow Temporarily Closed 'for Safety Reasons',"](#) *Guardian* (14 November 2024); European Museum of the Year Awards, ["The Gulag History Museum Wins 2021 Museum Prize"](#) (5 February 2021).

2021 but removed two years later. He faced a fine of up to five million rubles or imprisonment for up to five years.²⁶³

On 11 February 2025, Marc Fogel (1961–), an American history teacher at the Anglo-American School of Moscow since 2012, was released after three-and-a-half years in prison. In June 2022, he had been convicted of drug trafficking for possessing a small dose of medical marijuana and sentenced to fourteen years in prison [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].²⁶⁴

In early April 2025, in the run-up to the eightieth anniversary of the end of World War II, a group of European historians, curators, and memory professionals published an “Open Letter to the People of the USA” in ten languages, calling for international support to counter Russian disinformation about World War II and Ukraine that had began spreading into American narratives. The letter condemned the distorted memory of World War II to justify Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and the state-sponsored censorship of historical views in Russia. It also exposed President Vladimir Putin’s false views that Poland started the war in 1939 and Ukraine the war in 2022 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*].²⁶⁵

On [15] May 2025, a wall sculpture with a life-sized figure of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin (1878–1953; in office 1924–1953), entitled “Gratitude of the People to the Leader and Commander” and dedicated to Stalin’s role in delivering victory for the Soviet Union in World War II, was reinstalled at the Taganskaya metro station in central Moscow. Unveiled originally in 1950, it had been removed in 1966. When the next day protesters left two signs on the monument displaying quotes from President Vladimir Putin (in office as president between 2000–2008 and since 2012; and as prime minister between 2008–2012) and former President Dmitry Medvedev (in office as president between 2008–2012; and as prime minister between 2012–2020) critical of Stalin, they were quickly removed, and two of the activists were detained, risking a fine. Since Putin’s advent to power, at least 108 monuments to Stalin had been erected around the country, at a pace which had accelerated since the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Сергей Киселев, “[Силовики начали преследовать историков за «реабилитацию нацизма» в статьях о Великой отечественной войне](#),” *Moscow Times* (17 January 2025).

²⁶⁴ Ivan Nechepurenko & Julian Barnes, “[Who Is Marc Fogel? The American Teacher Caught in a Global Power Struggle](#),” *New York Times* (11 February 2025).

²⁶⁵ Historians for Ukraine, “[Open Letter to the People of the USA](#)” (April 2025).

²⁶⁶ Reuters, “[New Stalin Monument in Moscow Subway Stirs Debate](#),” *CNN* (23 May 2025); Ivan Nechepurenko, “[Stalin’s Image Returns to Moscow’s Subway, Honoring a Brutal History](#),” *New York Times* (28 May 2025); Mackenzie Argent, “[A Tribute to Repression?: Moscow Unveils New Stalin Statue in Subway Station](#),” *Index on Censorship* (30 May 2025).

In the summer of 2025, Vladimir Volokhonsky, a former member of the Russian-speaking *Wikipedia* community, initiated a so-called Red Pen-initiative in order to annotate the new eleventh-grade history textbook dealing with “Russian History, 1945–Early 21st Century” [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] page-by-page with critical comments.²⁶⁷

On 17 July 2025, members of parliament passed a law criminalizing deliberate online searches for “knowingly extremist materials,” defined as content officially added by a court to a government-maintained registry (a running list of about 5,500 entries), covering, among others, materials that promoted “Nazi ideology” – a widely used pretext for politically motivated arrests, including for critics of the 2022 invasion of Ukraine [See NCH *Annual Reports 2009–2010, 2014, 2017, 2021–2024*]. The law would take effect in September 2025. It was widely criticized as overreach by parties across the entire political spectrum. Until then criminalization was limited to creating or online sharing of “extremist content.”²⁶⁸

See also Afghanistan, Belarus, France, Georgia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Romania, Ukraine, United Nations/International, United States.

RWANDA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2000–2017, 2019–2024.

Thirty years after the 1994 genocide that left more than half a million people, predominantly Tutsi, dead, efforts to deliver justice for the killings and ensure that those responsible were brought to account continued worldwide. Several individuals responsible for the genocide, including former high-level government officials and other key figures behind the massacres, had been brought to justice, and more prosecutions of genocide suspects were conducted in domestic courts across Europe under the principle of universal jurisdiction – despite President Paul Kagame’s objections against the principle when used to seek prosecution of Rwandan Patriotic Front soldiers [See NCH *Annual Report 2009*] – including over a dozen in France and Belgium. Rwandan judicial authorities continued to investigate and prosecute genocide cases, including against individuals extradited from other countries. To mark the thirty years since the genocide, Human Rights Watch released a series of archives highlighting the

²⁶⁷ Red Pen, [website](#); Dina Gusejnova, personal communication (6 & 7 June 2025).

²⁶⁸ Mary Ilyushina, “[New Russian Law Criminalizes Online Searches for Controversial Content](#),” *Washington Post* (17 July 2025).

efforts of human rights defenders in Rwanda and abroad to warn about the planned genocide and their attempts to stop the killings.²⁶⁹

See also Belgium, Burundi, France.

²⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 391–392; Human Rights Watch, “[Human Rights Watch Rwanda Archives: March 1993 – December 1994](#)” (Washington: HRW, 2 April 2024).

SAINT VINCENT

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2014.

SAUDI ARABIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 2001, 2006, 2010–2011, 2013, 2017–2021, 2024.

On 1 March 2025, *Muawiya*, a thirty-part television series written by Egyptian journalist Khaled Salah, directed by Palestinian-American filmmaker Tarek al-Arian, and produced by Saudi Arabia-owned MBC was launched and immediately banned in Iraq and Iran, and criticized in Egypt. A controversial historical figure, particularly among Shia Muslims, Muawiya – founder and first caliph of the Umayyad Caliphate ([602]–680) – and his son Yazid (645–683) had fought wars over the Prophet Muhammad’s succession against Ali (600–661), the latter’s son-in-law, and his son Husayn (626–680) in Siffin (657) and Karbala (680) respectively, leading to a schism between Sunni and Shia Muslims. As a result of Muawiya’s complicated legacy, the new series was banned in Iran for “whitewashing Muawiya’s dynasty” and in Iraq because “[t]he broadcast of historically controversial content may provoke sectarian debates, which could threaten social harmony and disrupt the fabric of society, particularly during Ramadan.” The series was also criticized in Egypt because critics at Al Azhar University and elsewhere called it unacceptable to depict the companions of the Prophet Muhammad.²⁷⁰

See also Kuwait.

SENEGAL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002–2004, 2006, 2009, 2013, 2017–2018, 2020, 2023.

In March 2024, the National Assembly adopted an amnesty law that, justified by “a spirit of national reconciliation” and the “appeasement of the political and social climate,” covered offenses linked to “protests or politically motivated incidents, that took place between 1 February 2021 and 25 February

²⁷⁰ Rayhan Uddin, “[Muawiya: The Ramadan Series about an Early Islamic Ruler That’s Causing a Stir](#),” *Middle East Eye* (3 March 2025).

2024, in Senegal or abroad.” The amnesty law prevented the families of at least 65 people killed, the majority by security and defense forces, from obtaining justice.²⁷¹

On 11 November 2024, in the lead-up to the eightieth anniversary of the 1 December 1944 Thiaroye massacre – in which French forces killed up to 300 colonial French West African veterans from the 1940 Battle of France – Mamadou Diouf, a historian and professor of African Studies at Columbia University, New York, and President of the committee for the commemoration of the Thiaroye massacre, called on the French government to release all archives related to the massacre. Although in 2014 then President François Hollande (in office between 2012–2017) had handed over a copy of the French archives to the government, authorities and scholars suspected the existence of non-disclosed documents. Diouf’s committee had drafted a list of missing documents, including where they were possibly archived [See NCH *Annual Report 2017*].²⁷²

See also Chad.

SERBIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2021–2024. For previous entries, *see* Serbia / Kosovo; Serbia / Montenegro.

On 24 June 2024, security forces detained Bosnian actor and writer Fedja Štukan upon arrival at a Belgrade airport to attend the Krokodil literary festival and put him on a flight to Sarajevo, Bosnia, reportedly designating him as a “national security risk.” According to Štukan, the reason for his deportation was the publication of his autobiography, *Blank* (2021), which described his journey from the frontlines of the war in Bosnia (1992–1995), in which he was a pilot, to political activism and Hollywood film-making, allegedly making many unwelcome detailed revelations in the process. President Aleksandar Vučić had previously described Štukan as “a criminal.”²⁷³

In September 2024, the war crimes trial against seven Bosnian Serb ex-policemen accused of killing 1,313 Bosniaks during the 1995 Srebrenica genocide resumed after an eighteen-month delay. The trial

²⁷¹ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 321.

²⁷² Coumba Kane, “[Mamadou Diouf: ‘L’histoire impériale ne peut plus être énoncée exclusivement par la France’](#),” *Le Monde* (11 November 2024).

²⁷³ Lili Bayer, “[No Such Thing as Free Speech in Serbia, Says Deported Actor and War Critic](#),” *Guardian* (25 June 2024).

at the Belgrade High Court had repeatedly been postponed since its start in 2017. As of September 2024, only two of eight hearings scheduled for 2024 had actually taken place.²⁷⁴

On 16 September 2024, Belgrade mayor Aleksandar Šapić announced an initiative to erect a monument for the leader of the Chetnik movement during World War II Dragoljub “Draža” Mihailović (1893–1946). He also called for the removal of Communist memorials, including the House of Flowers mausoleum for former President of Yugoslavia Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980; in power between 1953–1980) and his wife Jovanka Broz. Šapić had previously proposed to rename the Museum of Yugoslavia into the “Museum of Serbian History.” The Chetniks had committed many ideologically and ethnically motivated massacres, described by some historians as constituting genocide, against Jews, Croats, Muslims and Communist partisans. In 1946, Mihailović was put on trial for collaboration with the Axis powers by the new Communist administration and sentenced to death. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991–1995, the Chetnik ideology regained some popularity. In 2004, parliament had passed Law 137 on Rights of Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Their Families, which granted Chetniks the same status as the anti-Fascist resistance movement of Communist Partisans, and in 2006 it passed the Law on Rehabilitation stipulating vague criteria for the rehabilitation of people who were deprived of their legal rights after 1941 or persecuted by the Communists on “ideological and political grounds.” In 2015, the Belgrade Higher Court had used a 2011 version of the Law on Rehabilitation to rehabilitate Mihailović [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*].²⁷⁵

On 29 November 2024, the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights wrote an allegations letter to the government concerning its decision to remove historical buildings in Belgrade from the list of protected cultural monuments, on unlawful grounds and without appropriate consultative process, and the consecutive ongoing destruction of these sites for the construction of *in situ* private commercial buildings, and repression against those protecting the sites.²⁷⁶

In May 2025, it became known that the American company Affinity Global was granted a 99-year lease on the former Defense Ministry buildings in the center of Belgrade – bombed by NATO in 1999 to stop Serbia’s military campaign in Kosovo, and a landmark and memorial site since – to redevelop it into a

²⁷⁴ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 402.

²⁷⁵ Sven Milekic & Marija Ristic, “[Serbia Rehabilitates WWII Chetnik Leader Mihailovic](#),” *Balkan Insight* (14 May 2015); Ivana Nikolic, “[How Serbia Changed Its Mind about World War II History](#),” *Balkan Insight* (6 February 2020); Jovan Byford, “Book Review: Jelena Đureinović, The Politics of Memory of the Second World War in Contemporary Serbia – Collaboration, Resistance and Retribution,” *Comparative Southeast European Studies*, 69, no. 1 (2021), 167–169; Leonardo Torelli, “[Forging New National Identities in Former Yugoslavia](#),” *Eurac Research* (6 October 2023); Milica Stojanovic, “[Belgrade Mayor’s Call for Memorial to Serbian Chetnik Leader Criticised](#),” *Balkan Insight* (17 September 2024).

²⁷⁶ United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, [Allegations Letter UA SRB 4/2024](#) (29 November 2024) and [response from Serbia](#) (27 January 2025).

luxury hotel and apartment tower complex (to be dubbed Trump Tower Belgrade), despite its protected status under Serbia's cultural heritage laws since 2005. President Aleksandar Vučić declared that "It's important to overcome the burden from 1999." On 14 May 2025, however, police arrested the official who had lifted the complex's protected status. Prosecutors said that Goran Vasić, the acting director of the Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, had admitted to fabricating an expert opinion which had been used to justify the change of status. He faced charges of abuse of office and forgery of official documents.²⁷⁷

See also Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Russia.

SERBIA / KOSOVO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2008–2020.

For previous entries, *see* Serbia.

SERBIA / MONTENEGRO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1999, 2001–2007.

For previous entries, *see* Montenegro and Serbia; Montenegro.

SEYCHELLES

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2019, 2022.

SIERRA LEONE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2000–2012, 2016, 2021, 2024.

On 7 November 2024, a ruling by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court found that Sierra Leone's vagrancy laws – which criminalized anyone deemed to be "loitering" in public

²⁷⁷ Guy Delauney, "[A Belgrade Landmark Bombed by Nato Could Get Trump Makeover](#)," *BBC News* (12 June 2025).

and “not giving a good account of himself” as an “idle and disorderly person” – were in breach of its duties under the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and ordered the government to repeal them. Loitering was a petty offense defined in the Public Order Act of 1965 and the Summary Conviction Offences Ordinance of 1906, itself based on the English Vagrancy Act of 1824. Amnesty International, in its third-party intervention to the ECOWAS Court, had argued that colonial vagrancy laws such as these discriminated against people living in poverty, LGBTI people, and sex-workers and violated their right to dignity, as well as the principle of legality.²⁷⁸

On 30 May 2025, lawyers for Chernoh Alpha Bah – a United States-based Sierra Leonean historian who had been subjected to attacks and threats, including death threats, since 2021 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*] – sent a letter to President Julius Maada Bio notifying the authorities of Bah’s proposed trip to Sierra Leone later in 2025 to carry out archival and oral history research and asking for security guarantees during his stay.²⁷⁹

See also Liberia.

SINGAPORE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2009–2011, 2015–2016, 2018–2022, 2024.

In May 2024, a new statue of British Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781–1826), erected at Fort Canning Park, stirred controversy. The statue was one of many dedications to Raffles, including two eight-foot statues, a business district and dozens of buildings bearing his name. Moreover, Singaporean history textbooks credited him with the founding of the city-state (following a declaration by the governing People’s Action Party after the 1965 independence from Malaysia) and praised him for transforming a “sleepy fishing village” into a thriving seaport. Critics, however, argued that Raffles was known for treating nonwhite inhabitants as inferior, for creating segregated districts based on race and that, although he outlawed slavery in Singapore, he continued to allow the trade of slaves as young as 13 on Java (present-day Indonesia). Others criticized the government for allowing the statue to be placed on the site of the tombs of precolonial Malay kings, and condemned the statue’s plaque – which praised

²⁷⁸ Amnesty International, “[Sierra Leone: Authorities Must Repeal Colonial Vagrancy Laws Following Historic ECOWAS Ruling](#)” (press release) (London: AI, 13 November 2024).

²⁷⁹ Modouh Drameh & Associates, Letter to President Julius Maada Bio (Request for Security Guarantees and Protection on Behalf of dr. Chernoh Alpha M. Bah During His Proposed Visit to Sierra Leone) (30 May 2025).

Raffles for “cultivat[ing] plants of economic importance” what critics considered a euphemism for stimulating the growth of British cash crops.²⁸⁰

In [September] 2024, the National University of Singapore (NUS) issued a confidential procedure for vetting prospective speakers at NUS–organized events based on their likelihood of addressing topics deemed “controversial” or “sensitive” for Singapore or the Southeast Asian region. The procedure was criticized by various scholars for being vague on what constituted “controversial” or “sensitive” topics, and how to assess their likelihood, and for allowing criticism of the government to be censored. One of the critics was Sol Iglesias, who had been barred from a panel in November 2023 allegedly because of anti-government criticism by her husband, historian and democracy activist Thum Ping Tjin [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].²⁸¹

SLOVAKIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 2002, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013–2015, 2017, 2022–2023.

In early August 2024, art historian Alexandra Kusá was dismissed as director of the Slovenská národná galéria (SNG; Slovak National Gallery). The decision by Minister of Culture Martina Šimkovičová followed one day after Kusá had expressed support for the recently dismissed director of the Slovenské národné divadlo (Slovak National Theater) Matej Drlička. The dismissal of Kusá, who had been working for twenty years for the SNG of which the last fourteen years as director, drew widespread criticism within Slovakia including a 12 August protest that drew 18,000 people demanding the resignation of Šimkovičová. An open letter calling for Kusá’s reinstatement was signed by 483 art historians and other art professionals as of 13 September 2024.

Šimkovičová had previously dissolved the public broadcaster Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska (Radio and Television of Slovakia) and announced plans to cut funding for LGBTQ+-projects as part of a campaign to purge prosecutors, journalists, and cultural institutions considered “liberal” or pro-European.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ Sui-Lee Wee, “[A New Statue of a British Colonialist Exposes a Divide in Singapore](#),” *New York Times* (31 August 2024).

²⁸¹ Yojana Sharma, “[Vetting of Invited Speakers Raises Academic Freedom Fears](#),” *University World News* (11 January 2025).

²⁸² Sarah Schug, “[Unpacking Slovakia’s Crackdown on Culture with Alexandra Kusá](#),” *The Parliament* (2 September 2024); Andrew Higgins, “[After Being Shot, Slovakia’s Leader Targets His Enemies](#),” *New York Times* (12 September 2024).

SLOVENIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2007–2009, 2011–2013, 2015–2018, 2021, 2023.

On 16 May 2025, a bronze statue of Melania Trump (*née* Melanija Knavs) (1970–), made by American artist Brad Downey, was chopped off at the ankles and disappeared near her hometown Sevnica. On 4 July 2020, when American President Donald Trump took a hardline in his Independence Day address against those who vandalized or tore down statues of historical figures associated with racism or slavery, a wooden version of Melania Trump’s statue, made by sculptor Ales “Maxi” Zupevc, had been set on fire.²⁸³

SOMALIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2003, 2006, 2012–2014, 2019, 2022.

On 11 January 2025, the Italian ambassador returned a digital archive of Somali laws and official bulletins issued during the Amministrazione fiduciaria italiana della Somalia (Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration; 1950–1960) – a continuation of the League of Nations’ mandate system under the auspices of the United Nations – and after Somalia’s independence on 1 July 1960 up to 1989. A month prior, in December 2024, the Italian ambassador had returned a collection of 2,000 rare books. The restitutions were part of a decade-long collaboration between the Roma Tre University and the Somali Language Academy to preserve and return archives and cultural heritage.²⁸⁴

SOUTH AFRICA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–2004, 2006–2010, 2012–2021, 2023.

On 29 August 2024, Adam Mendelsohn, head of the historical studies department and director of the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies of the University of Cape Town (UCT), took his university to the High Court of South Africa, Western Cape division, to set aside two anti-Israel resolutions (one stating

²⁸³ Guy De Launey, “[Melania Trump Statue Goes Missing in Slovenia](#),” *BBC News* (16 May 2025); “[Fourth of July: Trump Vows to Defeat ‘Radical Left’ in Independence Day Speech](#),” *BBC News* (5 July 2020); Reuters, “[Melania Trump Sculpture in Slovenia Set on Fire on US Independence Day](#),” *BBC News* (9 July 2020).

²⁸⁴ “[Italy Donates Digital Archive of Somali Laws to Aid Legal and Cultural Recovery](#),” *Hiiraan* (11 January 2025).

that no UCT academic may enter into relations with any researchers affiliated to the Israeli military establishment; the other rejecting the definition of antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) adopted on 22 June 2024. He argued that the resolutions curtailed his research on modern Jewish history and seriously jeopardized grant and donor funding. On 11 November 2024, Mendelsohn was suspended from his role as head of UCT's history department, "pending an investigation."²⁸⁵

On 20 January 2025, twenty-five families sued the state for its failure to investigate and prosecute crimes committed during the Apartheid era (1948–1994) and follow the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC; 1996–2002). In its final report, the TRC had recommended investigating around 300 people for alleged crimes. However, none of them was ever prosecuted and many of them had since died. The victims' and survivors' families were seeking 167 million rand (US\$ 9 million) in damages and the establishment of a commission of enquiry into political interference in the implementation of the TRC recommendations. On 30 April 2025, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the establishment of an inquiry into whether previous governments had intentionally blocked investigations and prosecutions of Apartheid-era crimes.²⁸⁶

See also United States, Zambia.

SOUTH SUDAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2013, 2015–2021, 2024.

In September 2024, parliament enacted two bills: the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing Act, which sought to establish a commission to promote peace, national reconciliation, and healing; and the Compensation and Reparations Authority to advance justice and accountability for victims of abuses committed during the civil war (2013–2020), to identify persons eligible for reparations, and to establish a fund for this purpose. The bills were part of the terms of the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (to which the parties had recommitted in 2018). On 11 November 2024, President Salva Kiir signed the bills into law. The 2015 Agreement also provided for

²⁸⁵ Tali Feinberg, "[UCT Prof Sues University over Anti-Israel Resolutions](#)," *South African Jewish Report* (5 September 2024); Tali Feinberg, "[UCT 'Gave Up Hospital' to Pursue Anti-Israel Agenda](#)," *South African Jewish Report* (30 January 2025).

²⁸⁶ Nellie Peyton, "[Families of Apartheid-Era Victims Sue South African Government for Damages](#)," *Reuters* (23 January 2025); Tom Canetti, "[Four Decades On, Still No Justice for South Africa's Apartheid-Era Atrocities](#)," *France24* (9 March 2025); "[South Africa to Hold Inquiry on Alleged Hampering of Apartheid Prosecutions](#)," *Al Jazeera* (30 April 2025).

the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan by the African Union Commission (AUC), but the AUC had so far failed to move ahead with the court's creation, and proposals were repeatedly blocked by the South Sudanese Council of Ministers [See NCH *Annual Reports 2016–2021, 2024*].²⁸⁷

SPAIN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 1999, 2002–2024.

On 17 June 2024, the Constitutional Court in Madrid ruled against the application of the 2022 Democratic Memory Law to investigate allegations of torture, enforced disappearance, and extrajudicial executions, among others, committed during the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1892–1975; in power between 1939–1975). Reiterating a previous ruling from September 2021, it argued that there was no crime against humanity in the Spanish Legal Code at the time the crimes were committed (*nullum crimen sine lege*), and that their prosecution as “ordinary crimes” (*delitos ordinarios*) was precluded by statutes of limitations and the 1977 Amnesty Law. The court's ruling was criticized by various human rights organizations. Following the ruling, on 10 September 2024, the Court of Instruction No.50 in Madrid shelved the first-ever admitted case investigating Franco-era torture [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*], citing the Constitutional Court ruling.²⁸⁸

In November 2024, the government of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez (in office since 2018) began the process of designating the Real Casa de Correos (Royal House of the Post Office) in Madrid – the seat of the regional government of the autonomous community of Madrid – as a “place of memory” to commemorate the victims of torture during the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1892–1975; in power between 1939–1975). During the dictatorship, the building had housed the Dirección General de Seguridad (Ministry of Interior and State Security). The biggest opposition party, Partido Popular (PP; People's Party), announced legal action to stop the process, calling the effort to “link this historical building to Francoism ... a genuine disgrace.” In recent years, the memory of the Francoist dictatorship

²⁸⁷ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 429; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 33, 340; David K. Deng, “[No Way but Forward for Transitional Justice in South Sudan](#),” *Justiceinfo.net* (6 May 2025).

²⁸⁸ “[España: Dos años de Ley de Memoria Democrática: Lentitud e ineficacia en su puesta en marcha y ausencia de justicia para las víctimas](#),” *Amnesty International* (21 October 2024); Sam Jones, “[Spanish Judge Shelves Landmark Case of Franco-Era Torture Victim](#),” *Guardian*; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 342.

had become a frequent bone of contention between the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE; Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) and the PP [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*].²⁸⁹

See also Mexico, Peru.

SRI LANKA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998–2004, 2008–2024.

On 1 January 2024, the Bill on the Commission for Truth, Unity and Reconciliation (CTUR) was made public after months of delay. On 9 January, the government also passed the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation Act. Both were criticized for ignoring the records of previously established commissions, retraumatizing victims' relatives by again requesting their testimonies, leaving unaddressed whether relatives would be able to get access to records related to their case, and for not establishing any mechanisms for the archiving of future CTUR records [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*].²⁹⁰

In the lead-up to the annual Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day, on 18 May 2024, police forces arrested four Tamil people in Trincomalee, Eastern province, for serving “kanji” (a rice porridge symbolic of the starvation conditions many civilians suffered at the end of the Civil War [1983–2009]). Authorities also obtained court orders to prevent some relatives of people who were forcibly disappeared during the Civil War from attending commemorative events. At some locations police forces intervened to prevent events from proceeding or block people from reaching them. [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. On 17 May 2024, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published the report *Accountability for Enforced Disappearances in Sri Lanka*, in which it called on the government to, among other things, set up independent accountability mechanisms for enforced disappearances since the 1970s, to actively and carefully locate and investigate mass graves, and to ensure victims' and relatives' right to truth, including by declassifying archives [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*].²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ Sam Jones, “[‘We’re Devastated’: Anger As Madrid Backtracks on Museum Plan for Site of Robert Capa’s Famous Civil War Photo](#),” *Guardian* (8 December 2024).

²⁹⁰ Nigel Nugawela, “[The Commission For Truth, Unity and Reconciliation: A Damp Squib for Human Rights Archives and Records](#),” *Groundviews* (1 November 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 45, 343, 345.

²⁹¹ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [Accountability for Enforced Disappearances in Sri Lanka](#) (Geneva: OHCHR, 2024); “[Sri Lanka: Crackdown Over Civil War Anniversary](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (23 May 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 345.

On 23 July 2024, the government issued an apology to Muslims across Sri Lanka for forcing them to cremate relatives who had died from COVID-19, which was contrary to Islamic beliefs [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Muslim representatives accepted the apology, but announced their intent to sue two academics responsible for the forced cremation policy and seek reparation.²⁹²

On 28 July 2024, Human Rights Watch reported on a government campaign to deny Hindus, Muslims, and other religious minorities access to places of worship, and to redesignate their property and culturally-significant places as Buddhist sites. The campaign centered on three policies. First, military, police, nationalist Buddhist clergy, and government agencies such as the Department of Archaeology, promoted majority Sinhalese Buddhist settlement in the North and East to the detriment of the rights to property and religious freedom of predominantly Tamil and Muslim populations. These resettlement policies included the damaging and removal of Hindu idols, and attacks on and arrests of religious worshippers. Second, the Department of Archaeology had surveyed an estimated 600 Hindu temples in the Eastern Province, frequently leading to Buddhist clergy and security forces denying Hindu worshippers access to them. Third, a campaign to redesignate Tamil Hindu temples as Buddhist sites had gathered speed in 2020 when then President Gotabaya Rajapaksa (in office between 2019–2022) established the Presidential Task Force for Archaeological Heritage Management in the Eastern Province. Although the task force was abolished, similar policies continued during the presidency of his successor Ranil Wickremesinghe (in office between 2022–2024).²⁹³

On 21 September 2024, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, a former leader of the Marxist-Leninist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) during the Civil War (1983–2009), was elected president. Dissanayake had campaigned on a platform of national unity, including ending the military occupation of Tamil lands and releasing political prisoners. After his election, he announced plans to establish a truth and reconciliation commission and, contrary to previous years [See NCH *Annual Reports 2020–2024*], allowed Tamil commemorations to take place, including the annual Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day on 18 May 2025. On the other hand, Dissanayake, like his predecessors, refused to engage with the United Nations (UN)-initiated Sri Lanka Accountability Project (SLAP) set up to collect evidence of potential war crimes and rejected the 9 October 2024 UN Human Rights Council resolution extending the SLAP mandate by one year.²⁹⁴

²⁹² “[Sri Lankan Government Apologizes for ‘Forced’ Cremation of Muslim Covid Victims](#),” *NDTV* (23 July 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 345.

²⁹³ “[Sri Lanka: Authorities Target Religious Minorities](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (28 July 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 438–439.

²⁹⁴ Amnesty International, *The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 345; Jeevan Ravindran, “[‘Need Answers’: Will Sri Lanka’s Tamils Find War Closure under Dissanayake?](#),” *Al Jazeera* (24 May 2025).

SUDAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002–2003, 2006–2024.

In August 2024, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights passed a resolution establishing a joint fact-finding mission with the African Union Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security to investigate human rights violations committed since the beginning of the Civil War (2023–present). The fact-finding mission intended to publish its findings within three months, but on 31 January 2025 it extended the deadline for contributions.

In September 2024, the United Nations (UN)-backed Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (FFM) published its first report, detailing war crimes committed by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and crimes against humanity committed by the RSF during the Civil War. The report proposed recommendations for accountability and access to justice for victims, including expanding the International Criminal Court's (ICC) jurisdiction beyond Darfur to the entire country; establishing an international judicial mechanism; increasing the use by States of universal jurisdiction; and the establishment of a truth commission and a victim support and reparations office. Three men facing ICC charges, including former President Omar al-Bashir (ruled between 1989–2019), were yet to be handed over to the ICC for trial. In October 2024, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution extending the FFM's mandate by one year.²⁹⁵

In [early September] 2024, an anonymous employee at the National Museum in Khartoum exposed a looting campaign of tens of thousands of artefacts from the museum located in an area controlled by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary organization. Already in June 2023, reports had emerged of RSF forces entering the museum's bioarchaeology lab [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*]. The museum's collection held more than 100,000 items, including embalmed mummies dating back to 2,500 BCE, and historical artifacts from the stone age, the Kingdom of Kush (1070 BCE – 550 AD), ancient Egypt, and the Christian and Islamic eras. Lootings were also reported at the Khalifa House in Omdurman and the Nyala museum in South Darfur.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 446; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 348.

²⁹⁶ Zeinab Mohammed Salih, "[Tens of Thousands of Artefacts Looted from Sudan Museum, Says Official](#)," *Guardian* (9 September 2024).

SURINAME

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2004, 2009–2010, 2012–2013, 2015–2016, 2018, 2024.

In August 2024, the Chairman of the National Reparations Commission Armand Zunder called on the government to replace symbols dating back to the Dutch colonial era (1667–1975). He singled out the country’s coat of arms, a barely adapted version of the logo of the Sociëteit van Suriname (Society of Suriname) which ran the colonial-era economy built on slave labor and resource extraction, and the Wilhelmina Mountain and its peak, the Julianatop, named after the Dutch Queens Wilhelmina (1880–1962) and Juliana (1909–2004).²⁹⁷

SWAZILAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2011, 2013, 2016–2018; *see* Eswatini.

SWEDEN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2017–2018, 2020, 2022, 2024.

See Finland.

SWITZERLAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1997, 1999–2000, 2004, 2007–2009, 2014, 2016–2018, 2022, 2024.

On 15 April 2025, President of the Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Geschichte (Swiss Society for History) Sacha Zala expressed concerns about the possible censorship effect of artificial intelligence on archival catalogs and finding aids. In a large-scale operation, the Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv (Swiss Federal Archives) used artificial intelligence-supported programs to redact names and data of persons and organizations (including, for example, names of diplomats and presidents) in the finding aids. Zala was concerned that the redactions were overly broad and would seriously interfere with research into

²⁹⁷ [“Calls For Suriname to Follow Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago in Decolonization Process,”](#) *Caribbean Today* (29 August 2024).

Swiss history because search results in the online access to the Federal Archives would not list such files anymore.²⁹⁸

See also Germany, Syria.

SYRIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2002, 2004–2024.

On 11 March 2024, the Office of the Attorney General in Bern, Switzerland, indicted former military commander and Vice President Rifaat al-Assad (1937–), uncle of Bashar al-Assad, for war crimes and crimes against humanity during the 1982 Hama massacre. On 26 June 2024, the appeals court in Paris upheld arrest warrants against President Bashar al-Assad (in office between 2000–2024), his brother Maher al-Assad and two senior Syrian military officials for their alleged complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity for the use of banned chemical weapons against civilians in Ghouta and Douma in August 2013. The French Cassation Court had yet to rule on their final validity, following a prosecutor’s appeal relating to the application of the head of state immunity principle.²⁹⁹

On 3 August 2024, marking the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the Yazidi genocide in 2014, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic stated that Yazidi survivors and victims of the genocide and other crimes committed by ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant; also known as Da’esh), as well as women and children held solely for their perceived affiliation to ISIL, should be immediately released from unlawful detention in Northeast Syria, repatriated where possible, and supported to rebuild their lives. Around 44,000 women and children remained in detention camps in Northeast Syria as of August 2024, including around 27,000 children.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ “[Wenn KI die Archivdokumente schwärzt](#),” *Echo der Zeit* (15 April 2025); Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Geschichte, “[Kritik an KI-gestützten Schwärzungen in den Findmitteln des Bundesarchivs](#),” (17 April 2025); Sacha Zala, personal communication (19 May 2025); [Online Access to the Federal Archives](#).

²⁹⁹ “[Former Syrian Vice President Rifaat al-Assad Will Stand Trial in Switzerland on Charges of War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity](#),” *Trial International* (12 March 2024); “[Paris Court Upholds Validity of Arrest Warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad](#),” *Le Monde* (26 June 2024); Human Rights Watch, *[World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#)* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 453; Amnesty International, *[The State of the World’s Human Rights](#)* (London: AI, 2025), 353.

³⁰⁰ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, “[Ten Years after the Yazidi Genocide: UN Syria Commission of Inquiry Calls for Justice, Including Accountability and Effective Remedies, for ISIL Crimes](#)” (press release; 3 August 2024).

On 17 October 2024, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that about sixteen million Syrian citizens suffered as a result of government control over official documents. The SNHR report stated that the government exploited citizens' needs for these documents to extort exorbitant fees and used them as an instrument of war against dissidents. In violation of the constitution, the government also enabled and supported the intrusion of its security agencies into state institutions, through frequently imposing a requirement for applicants to obtain security clearance before they could obtain documents or conduct transactions. Among the main groups targeted were individuals wanted or sought for prosecution, particularly political activists and humanitarian workers; former detainees who were arbitrarily arrested; families of forcibly disappeared persons; refugees; undocumented children; university students and graduates; property owners; residents of rebellious areas that reached so-called settlements with the regime; individuals wanted for mandatory or reserve military service; ethnic minorities; and people traveling outside the country. The report also shed light on the issue of obtaining death certificates for victims of extrajudicial killings, and of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance because the government reportedly tried to conceal its crimes by refusing to issue documents to these victims' bereaved families. The report further pointed to a black market in which authentic and forged official documents were sold. Finally, it summarized the ramifications for Syrians of the lack or loss of official documents, especially the denial of the rights to education, to healthcare, to humanitarian aid, to property, to nationality, to vote, and to free movement.³⁰¹

On 3 November 2024, protests broke out in Raqqa against the arrest of five teachers by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) after they refused to teach a new curriculum introduced by the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES; also known as Rojava). The new curriculum reportedly included "false historical and geographical content," the imposition of Kurdish as the primary language in schools, and information aligning with the ideology of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The teachers were taken to an undisclosed location.³⁰²

Immediately after the regime of President Bashar al-Assad (2000–2024) fell on 8 December 2024, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (established in 2011) visited Syria for the first time and received new information about the former government's official and secret detention facilities, including Sednaya prison, Military Intelligence Branch 235 ("Palestine Branch"), and mass grave sites. It was dismayed to see that much evidence and

³⁰¹ Syrian Network for Human Rights, "[About 16 Million Syrian Citizens Are Suffering as a Result of the Syrian Regime's Control Over Official Documents](#)" (17 October 2024); Syrian Network for Human Rights, "[About 16 Million Syrian Citizens Are Suffering as a Result of the Syrian Regime's Control over Official Documents \[report\]](#)" (17 October 2024).

³⁰² "[SDF Arrests Five Teachers for Rejecting Curriculum Amid Protests and Tribal Threats in Raqqa](#)," *The Syrian Observer* (4 November 2024); [Education in Danger: Monthly News Brief](#), *Insecurity Insight* (November 2024), 9.

documentation that could assist families to discover the whereabouts of tens of thousands of dead and missing persons and serve as evidence in future accountability processes had been damaged, dispersed, taken away, offered for sale, looted, burned, or otherwise destroyed before and after the takeover, often in chaotic circumstances. It also observed that large numbers of documents were safeguarded or still salvageable. The commission further learned that the exhumation of mass graves had already begun, both by rescue organizations and by private individuals. It warned that actions taken now, even if well-intentioned, might complicate future efforts to identify the victim. It asked the caretaker government for measures to protect mass gravesites, to safeguard all documents and evidence across Syria, to prevent the public from disturbing such sites and to ask that any documents or evidence taken be returned. The Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya Prison (ADMSP), Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch made similar appeals shortly after. Under the former government, authorities rarely informed families of the deaths of victims or rarely returned their human remains. There were also reports that security service archives in Damascus had been destroyed or pillaged after the takeover.³⁰³

On [11] December 2024, rebel fighters led by Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham destroyed the mausoleum of late President Hafez al-Assad (1930–2000; president in 1971–2000), in the latter’s hometown Qardaha, Latakia region. He was the father of President Bashar al-Assad (1965–) who was ousted on 8 December 2024, after years of civil war (2011–2024). Following his ouster, statues and posters of the al-Assad family were pulled down across Syria, including in Hama and Damascus. In Aleppo, a statue of Bassel al-Assad, Bashar al-Assad’s brother, on a horse was toppled. In a village north of Damascus, a statue of Hafez al-Assad was felled. In the months that followed, the humanitarian organization White Helmets worked to remove all remaining images of the al-Assad family to erase “the psychological effect of these images... [that] still strike fear in the hearts of the Syrians.”³⁰⁴

³⁰³ [“UN Commission of Inquiry Team Visits Syria, Welcomes Encouraging Signs by New Authorities to Engage on Human Rights Issues, and Urges Protection of Mass Graves and Evidence”](#) (press release) (20 December 2024); Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya Prison (ADMSP), Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, [“Syria: Preserve Evidence of Mass Atrocities”](#) (New York: Human Rights Watch, 23 December 2024); Mahmut Geldi, [“Syria’s Prison Records Vital for War Crimes Evidence,”](#) *Anadolu Ajansi* (10 December 2024); Camille Tawil, [“The ‘Smuggler’ of Syrian Torture Archives Reveals His True Identity,”](#) *Asharq Al-Awsat* (12 December 2024); Melvyn Ingleby, [“‘Saydnaya is een plaats delict. Maar het bewijs wordt voor onze ogen vernietigd,’”](#) *NRC Handelsblad* (16 December 2026); [Position Paper of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture ... in Respect of International Court Of Justice Application](#) (Geneva, 16 December 2024); [“Special Rapporteur on Torture Documents Syrian Violations for ICJ Case”](#) (press release) (Geneva, 19 December 2024); Véronique Ginouvès, [“Call for the Archives of the New Syria to Be Safeguarded and Made Accessible,”](#) *Hypothèses* (6 January 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 353–354; Raja Abdulrahim, [“Syrians Rush to Preserve Remembrances of a Painful Revolution,”](#) *New York Times* (23 May 2025).

³⁰⁴ Jaroslav Lukiv, [“Syria Rebels Burn Tomb of Bashar al-Assad’s Father,”](#) *BBC News* (11 December 2024); [“Moment Former Syrian President’s Statue Toppled in Hama,”](#) *BBC News* (6 December 2024); [“Statue of Bashar al-Assad’s Father Toppled in Damascus Suburb,”](#) *BBC News* (7 December 2024); David Guttenfelder & Raja Abdulrahim, [“Assad Defaced: Syrians Destroy a Dictator’s Icons,”](#) *New York Times* (15 April 2025).

In early January 2025, the transitional government's education ministry posted a new Islam-oriented school curriculum for all age groups. In this new curriculum, the phrase "Defending the nation" was replaced by "Defending Allah"; the Evolution and Big Bang theories were dropped from science teaching; references to the gods worshipped in pre-Islamic Syria as well as images of their statues were removed; the significance of heroine Queen Zenobia (c. 240–c. 274), who ruled Palmyra in the Roman era, was downplayed; and the Assad era (1971–2024) was essentially excised from the curriculum. Civil society groups protested against the changes which were made before a planned National Dialogue Conference was held, but Education Minister Nazir al-Qadri assuaged their fears, saying that the only instructions he had issued were to remove content that glorified the Assad regime and to instate the Syrian revolutionary flag in all textbooks, and adding that the curriculum would remain essentially unchanged until specialized committees had reviewed and revised it.³⁰⁵

On 17 May 2025, transitional President Ahmad al-Sharaa issued Decree No. 20 establishing the National Commission for Transitional Justice (NCTJ). The NCTJ was criticized by various national and international human rights organizations for limiting its mandate to "uncovering the truth about grave violations caused by the defunct regime" – referring to the rule of the Assad dynasty (1971–2024) – while excluding victims of crimes committed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), the Syrian National Army (a coalition of armed opposition groups supported by Türkiye), foreign fighters and militias, foreign powers involved in aerial bombardments and unlawful detentions, and al-Sharaa's own Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham. It was further criticized for not including any victims' associations.³⁰⁶

See also France, Lebanon.

³⁰⁵ Sebastian Usher, "[New Syrian Government's School Curriculum Changes Spark Concern](#)," *BBC News* (3 January 2025).

³⁰⁶ Alice Autin, "[Syria's Transitional Justice Commission: A Missed Opportunity for Victim-Led Justice](#)," *Human Rights Watch* (19 May 2025); Syrians for Truth and Justice, "[Joint Statement on Decree No. 20 Stipulating the Establishment of a National Commission for Transitional Justice](#)" (press release) (23 May 2025); Mustafa Haid, "[Syria's Transitional Justice Commission and the Peril of Partiality](#)," *Justiceinfo.net* (23 June 2025).

TAIWAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998, 2001, 2008–2010, 2012, 2016–2020, 2022, 2024.

TAJIKISTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2017–2018, 2020, 2023–2024.

In June 2024, President Emomali Rahmon (in office since 1994) brought into force amendments to the “traditions” law, which banned clothing “foreign to the national culture” in public spaces, effectively prohibiting hijabs and other religious attire. This followed months of campaigns by officials urging women and girls to wear headscarves in the “Tajik” way and forcing men to shave their beards. Media reported incidents of women and girls being denied hospital entry for not wearing the approved style of head covering, forcibly taking individuals to police stations for fingerprinting and photographing, and detaining men to shave their beards at their own expense. The government had previously enacted restrictions on circumcisions, baby naming rituals, weddings, religious pilgrimage ceremonies, and funerals.

In July 2024, law enforcement officers detained two young women for Instagram posts in which they posed wearing shorter dresses, claiming it was “offensive to the honor” of Tajik women and mothers. The police released them after a “preventive” conversation but posted photographs from the young women’s accounts on the police social media platform without anonymizing their faces or account details. Later, the Ministry of Culture published examples of traditional national clothing “recommended” for women and girls.³⁰⁷

See also Uzbekistan.

TANZANIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2010, 2016–2017, 2024.

³⁰⁷ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 456–457.

THAILAND

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995, 1999, 2001–2002, 2005, 2007–2022, 2024.

In 2024, no military personnel or government officials were prosecuted for their role in the 2010 military crackdown on pro-democracy protests. Between 10 April and 19 May 2010, military forces had violently cracked down on pro-democracy protests led by the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (also known as the “Red Shirts”) against the administration of then-Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva (in office between 2008–2011), leaving at least 99, predominantly citizens, dead and more than 2,000 injured. The government also failed to pursue criminal investigations of the more than 2,800 killings that accompanied then Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra’s (in office between 2001–2006) “war on drugs” in 2003.³⁰⁸

In June 2024, five United Nations experts wrote to the government expressing concern about surveillance by Internal Security Operations Command agents of human rights defenders Angkhana Neelapaijit and Pranom Somwong related to a March 2024 commemoration of victims of enforced disappearance.³⁰⁹

In [mid-]September 2024, Puangthong Pawakapan, a lecturer at Chulalongkorn University’s Faculty of Political Sciences, was attacked by the army-controlled Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC). ISOC asked that the sale of her book, the Thai version of *Infiltrating Society: The Thai Military’s Internal Security Affairs* (2021) – a book about how the military penetrated Thai politics since the 1950s to promote ultra-royalism and secure internal order – be suspended, claiming that it was based on misinformation and damaged ISOC’s public image. It also accused Pawakapan of using a sloppy and unethical research methodology, saying that it would ask Chulalongkorn University to conduct an ethics probe into her research. Pawakapan refuted the allegations. In 2021, her phone had been the target of state-sponsored hacking.³¹⁰

On 28 October 2024, following the twentieth anniversary of the 25 October 2004 Tak Bai massacre, Human Rights Watch called on Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra (in office since August 2024) – whose father, Thaksin Shinawatra, (in office between 2001–2006), was prime minister during the massacre – to amend Article 95 of the Criminal Code containing a twenty-year statute of limitations for

³⁰⁸ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 465.

³⁰⁹ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 361.

³¹⁰ “[Security Agency Moves to Suspend Sale of New Book on Thai Military](#),” *Prachatai* (17 September 2024); Andrew Nathan, “[Infiltrating Society: The Thai Military’s Internal Security Affairs by Puangthong Pawakapan](#),” *Foreign Affairs* (19 April 2022).

criminal offenses which prevented legal action for the massacre. No former officials charged with murder and other offenses in connection to the massacre had been brought to justice. On 25 October 2004, 85 people had died and hundreds injured following the violent dispersal of ethnic Malay Muslim protesters in Tak Bai district, Narathiwat.³¹¹

TIMOR-LESTE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2003–2013, 2015–2018, 2023.

See Australia.

TOGO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2002, 2008–2013, 2017–2018, 2021.

TRINIDAD and TOBAGO

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2018.

TUNISIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001, 2011–2024.

On 1 August 2024, an investigating judge of the Tunis Court of First Instance ordered the pre-trial detention in the Manouba prison for women of journalist, human rights defender, and former President (2014–2018) of the Instance Vérité et Dignité (IVD; Truth and Dignity Commission) Sihem Bensedrine ([1950–]) on charges of “fraud,” “forgery,” and “abuse of official capacity” for allegedly falsifying a report denouncing corruption in the banking sector [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2023–2024]. Already on 8 February 2021, four United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteurs had sent a letter alerting the government to the risks of using allegations of corruption against Bensedrine as a pretext to obstruct

³¹¹ “[Thailand: 20 Years of Injustice for Tak Bai Massacre Victims](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (28 October 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 464.

the transitional justice process, and urged it to “ensure that criminal investigations are not used as a reprisal for the facts contained in the work or reports of the IVD” [See NCH *Annual Reports 2015–2021, 2023*]. In May 2023, independent UN human rights experts had expressed concern that the charges against Bensedrine appeared to be related to her work as IVD president. Bensedrine had also been vocal in her opposition against President Kais Saied (in office since 2019) and the systematic erosion of democracy and the rule of law under his presidency. On 8 August 2024, three UN Special Rapporteurs called on the government to “end abusive proceedings and reprisals against her,” and expressed serious concerns about the respect for her right to freedom of opinion and expression. In January 2025, Bensedrine’s detention was extended for four months. Later, she was taken to hospital after being on hunger strike for two weeks.³¹²

On 15 April 2025, the scientific council of the Faculty of Letters at the University of Manouba, Tunis, issued a press release in response to a proposal by several members of the history faculty to organize an academic tribute to historian Habib Kazdaghli [See NCH *Annual Reports 2013–2014, 2023*]. In the lead-up to the press release, several student groups campaigned against Kazdaghli, who specialized in the history of minorities in Tunisia with a particular focus on Jewish minorities, on the grounds that he was in favor of “normalization” with Israel [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*]. The press release reportedly denied any honors to Kazdaghli and anyone else accused of being in favor of such “normalization” and committed to investigate and sanction any member involved in “facts deemed problematic.” The press release was decried as an attack on academic freedom.

In 1999, Kazdaghli had founded the Tunisian Heritage Laboratory, with a specific interest in historically marginalized heritages in Tunisia, and a laboratory for the study of Italian, Greek, Jewish and other minorities in Tunisia. The latter was reportedly at risk of being dissolved.³¹³

³¹² [“Tunisia: Immediately Release Sihem Bensedrine, the Truth Commission’s Former President,”](#) *International Commission of Jurists* (6 August 2024); United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [“UN Experts Call for Justice for Tunisian Human Rights Defender”](#) (press release) (8 August 2024); Amnesty International, [Tunisia – Former Head of Truth Commission Arbitrarily Detained: Sihem Bensedrine](#) (30 August 2024); Network of Concerned Historians, [Campaign for Sihem Bensedrine](#) (24 September 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 472; UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, [“Tunisia: End All Forms of Persecution of Opponents and Activists”](#) (press release) (18 February 2025); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 365.

³¹³ Pascal Bruckner, et al., [“L’Université tunisienne à l’épreuve de l’intolérance,”](#) *Le Point* (23 April 2025).

TÜRKİYE (TURKEY)

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–1998, 2000–2024.

Throughout 2024, the Istanbul Criminal Court repeatedly postponed the fifth retrial of sociologist and feminist Pinar Selak, which had been scheduled to begin on 31 March 2023. In July 1998, Selek had been arrested for alleged involvement in a 1998 explosion at the Istanbul Spice Bazaar that killed seven people. She spent two years in prison, where she reportedly endured torture and other ill-treatment. She was acquitted four times (in 2006, 2008, 2011, and 2014), with expert witnesses testifying that the explosion had been caused by a gas leak. However, her acquittals were repeatedly overturned, including in June 2022 by the Supreme Court. International organizations, including PEN International, considered Selek's a political trial, because of her research on minorities, including LGBTQ+- and Kurdish communities. At the time of her arrest in 1998, she was working on an oral history of the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (PKK; Kurdistan Workers' Party), considered a terrorist organization in Türkiye. Since 2012, Selek has lived in France where she held a university position in sociology.³¹⁴

On 24 April 2024, also known as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, Cengiz Aktar, a political scientist at the University of Athens, Greece, criticized the government's continued denial of the 1915 Armenian genocide on a morning show of Açık Radyo (Open Radio), an independent radio station based in Istanbul. Following the show, the Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu (RTÜK; Radio and Television Supreme Council) issued an administrative fine to Açık Radyo and ordered it suspend its morning news program for five days. Açık Radyo paid the fine, but did not adhere to the five-day broadcast suspension. Subsequently, on 3 July 2024, RTÜK cancelled its broadcasting license. Açık Radyo contested the cancelation in court.³¹⁵

On 13 June 2024, Iranian historian Ali Asghar Haqdar, a specialist in the Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911) and the Qajar-period (1789–1925) in Persia, and a recipient of the 2013 Hellman/Hammett award for authors facing political persecution, was arrested in Istanbul and sent to a refugee camp in the Arnavutkoy municipality. His detention, officially due to the proximity of his passport's expiration date, was part of a wave of arrests of foreign nationals. At the refugee camp, he was rarely allowed to get fresh air and was mostly kept inside repurposed shipping containers. On 24 July, a court denied his request for temporary release. Haqdar had fled Iran after the 2009 re-election of President Mahmoud

³¹⁴ Sara Tor, "[Outrage at Plans to Develop Turkey's Cultural Heritage Sites](#)," *Guardian* (21 August 2023).

³¹⁵ "[Turkey's Media Watchdog Revokes Radio Station License over 'Armenian Genocide' Reference](#)," *Turkish Minute* (3 July 2024); Hilmi Hacaloğlu & Ezel Sahinkaya, "[Turkey Revokes Radio Station's License for Discussing 'Armenian Genocide'](#)," *Voice of America* (4 July 2024); Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 369.

Ahmadinejad (in office between 2005–2013), which had sparked nationwide protests against alleged voting fraud. Afterward, a document, allegedly leaked by the Intelligence Ministry, had listed Haqdar among several authors and translators accused of “fomenting sedition.”³¹⁶

On 4 October 2024 and 14 March 2025, members of the Saturday Mothers / People – a group of human rights defenders commemorating the victims of enforced disappearances in the 1980s and 1990s, and calling for investigations into their whereabouts and for accountability mechanisms – were acquitted for their participation in weekly vigils held since 27 May 1995 [See NCH *Annual Reports 2019, 2023–2024*]. The group continued to face restrictions on their weekly vigils, including a limitation of the number of participants to ten. The restrictions were lifted only for the group’s 1,000th vigil in May 2024.³¹⁷

On 30 January 2025, historian and political commentator Çiğdem Bayraktar Ör was detained on charges of “insulting the president and a public official because of their duty” in several social media posts. In the days leading up to her arrest, she had criticized the ruling Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP; Justice and Development Party) of corruption, incompetence, and suppression in a post on X (formerly Twitter). Ör held a Ph.D. in Atatürk’s Principles and Revolutionary History and had written several books on modern Turkish political history.³¹⁸

On 22 June 2025, journalist and political commentator Fatih Altaylı was arrested on charges of making online comments “threatening” President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (in office as Prime Minister between 2003–2014, and as President since 2014). On his YouTube channel, Altaylı had commented on an opinion poll showing majority support for checks on executive authority, saying “look at the history of this nation ... this is a nation which strangled its sultan when they didn’t like him or want him. There are quite a few Ottoman sultans who were assassinated, strangled, or whose deaths were made to look like suicide.” The day before the arrest, Erdoğan’s adviser Oktay Saral posted on X: “Altaylı! You’re in hot water!” The arrest was condemned by journalist unions and media organizations for violating the right to freedom of speech.³¹⁹

See also Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Syria, United States.

³¹⁶ [“Iranian Historian Who Escaped Persecution At Risk Of Being Sent Back To Iran,”](#) *RFE/RL* (25 July 2024).

³¹⁷ Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 369; [“Saturday Mothers/People,”](#) *Sessiz Kalma* (12 May 2025).

³¹⁸ [“Turkish Historian Arrested for ‘Insulting The President’,”](#) *Endangered Scholars Worldwide* (4 February 2025).

³¹⁹ Hamdi Firat Buyuk, [“Arrest of Turkish Journalist for Online Comments Condemned as ‘Unlawful’,”](#) *Balkan Insight* (23 June 2025).

TURKMENISTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2004, 2009, 2011–2012, 2015–2019, 2023.

See Iraq.

UGANDA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2005–2009, 2011–2013, 2015–2017, 2019–2021, 2023.

On 28 February 2024, International Criminal Court (ICC) judges ordered payment of over € 52 million of reparations for victims in the case against Dominic Ongwen. Ongwen, a former Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) commander, was convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity in 2021 [See NCH *Annual Report 2021*]. Joseph Kony, the LRA's founding leader and the only individual in Uganda against whom an ICC arrest warrant remained pending, was still at-large.³²⁰

On 30 May 2024, the United States government imposed travel sanctions on five Ugandan officials, including Peter Elwelu, the former deputy chief of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF; the armed forces of Uganda), for "extrajudicial killings" committed by UPDF members under his command. In November 2016, Elwelu had led a military raid in Kasese district after years of tension between the central government of President Yoweri Museveni (in office since 1986) and the Rwenzururu kingdom in western Uganda, killing at least 55 people, predominantly civilians, and transferring the King of Rwenzururu Charles Mumbere (official name Irema-Ngoma I) and scores of others to a police station 400 kilometers away, where over the course of two days 155 people, including children, died, including under violent interrogation. As of 2024, the government had failed to independently investigate or hold anyone accountable for the killings.³²¹

On 13 August 2024, the Gulu High Court convicted Thomas Kwoyelo of 44 charges of war crimes, including murder and kidnapping, in the first trial of a Lord Resistance Army (LRA) commander in a Ugandan court. Kwoyelo, who had himself been abducted as a child soldier in 2012, was the third most senior leader of the LRA, a Christian extremist organization that was founded by Joseph Kony in 1987, during the Ugandan insurgency (1986–1994) against President Yoweri Museveni (in power since 1986), and that, according to the United Nations, killed more than 100,000 people and abducted 60,000 children to serve as sexual slaves and child soldiers since then. On 25 October 2024, Kwoyelo was sentenced to forty years in prison. In 2018, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights had ordered the government to compensate Kwoyelo – who had been in detention since 2009 – for failure to try him within a reasonable time. The government had yet to comply.³²²

³²⁰ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 487.

³²¹ Oryem Nyeko, "[US Imposes Sanctions on Ex-Ugandan Military Commander](#)," *Human Rights Watch* (31 May 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 488.

³²² Nyasha Chingono, "['Justice Is Served': Relief at Ex-Kony Commander's Conviction in Uganda](#)," *Guardian* (21 August 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 487–488.

UKRAINE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 2009–2011, 2014–2024.

Among those killed at the frontline in the war against Russia were [See NCH *Annual Report 2023–2024* for related lists]:

- On 17 July 2023, journalist, author and candidate of historical sciences Dmytro Rybakov (?–2023) was killed during a battle on the Melitopol axis, where he served as platoon commander of the 47th Mechanized Mahura Brigade.³²³
- On 22 March 2025, Historian Nazar Oleshchuk (1992–2025) died while performing a combat mission in the Donetsk region. He had a master’s degree (with a specialty in “archival studies”) from Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. A businessman in Poland, he had returned to Ukraine to join the Defense Forces.³²⁴
- On 24 May 2025, Dmytro Serkov (2001–2025), an archivist at the state archive [in Rivne] who had become a lieutenant in the armed forces, died in the Kharkiv region.³²⁵

As of 22 January 2025, UNESCO had verified damage to 476 sites since the 24 February 2022 full-scale invasion by Russian forces. These included 149 religious sites, 241 buildings of historical and/or artistic interest, 32 museums, 33 monuments, 18 libraries, 1 archive and 2 archaeological sites [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2024*].³²⁶

On 8 February 2025, as a result of a Russian drone attack, the Mezhyvskyi archival unit in Dnipropetrovsk region was damaged. About ten percent of the collection of documents of the National Archival Fond was lost due to the fire and its extinguishing.³²⁷

In May 2025, the decision of the city council of Odessa to remove a bust of poet Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) and a statue of writer Isaac Babel (1894–1940), both Russian-speaking, under the so-called decolonization law (2023) – ordering the removal of “symbols of Russian imperial politics” to

³²³ [“List of Journalists Killed Since Start of Russia’s Full-Scale Aggression,”](#) *National Union of Journalists for Ukraine* (6 August 2024).

³²⁴ Марина Лісничук, [“Повернувся з-за кордону, щоб стати до лав захисників: у боях на Донеччині загинув 33-річний історик Назар Олещук,”](#) *Oboz.Ua* (27 March 2025); Evgeniya Kanchura, Personal communication (29 March 2025).

³²⁵ [“Рівненська міська рада,”](#) *Facebook* (27 May 2025); Evgeniya Kanchura, Personal communication (28 May 2025).

³²⁶ [“Damaged Cultural Sites in Ukraine Verified by UNESCO,”](#) *UNESCO* (7 February 2024).

³²⁷ Yulia Havryliuk, [“Russia Destroys Documents of the National Archive Fund in Dnipropetrovsk Region Kyiv,”](#) *UNN* (10 February 2025).

protect Ukrainian culture – was widely protested. Previously, the city council had renamed 230 streets honoring Soviet generals and Catherine the Great (1729–1796), the Russian empress who founded Odessa in 1794. A statue of Catherine was removed in late 2022. Opponents of the decolonization law appealed to UNESCO, arguing that some monuments slated for removal fell under its protection [See NCH *Annual Report 2022–2023*].³²⁸

In [July] 2025, historian Marta Havryshko (1984–), a war refugee and visiting assistant professor in Holocaust Pedagogy and Antisemitism Studies at Clark University, United States, was dismissed from her post at the I. Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (NASU) in Lviv for “absence from the workplace.” The dismissal occurred notwithstanding the fact that many NASU employees, including Havryshko, had been placed on “unpaid leave” after the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine in order to allow them to take up temporary academic positions abroad. An expert in the history of the Holocaust, World War II, Ukrainian nationalism, war crimes committed by the Russian military since 2014, and sexual violence in war, Havryshko had been the target of online harassment campaigns, including antisemitic abuse and death and rape threats, especially by far-right Russian and Ukrainian groups. She was also accused of spreading “pro-Russian propaganda” and labeled a “Russian asset.” Her book *Overcoming Silence: Women’s War Stories* (Kharkiv 2018), exploring the experiences of women in the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Ukrainian Insurgent Army during and after World War II, had been banned in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine as “extremist literature” and removed from libraries. Her research into Ukrainian ethnonationalism and the historical and contemporary far-right led her to be added, in January 2025, to the controversial Myrotvorets database listing individuals allegedly endangering Ukraine’s national security. In addition to online hate campaigns directed to her and her son, her family in Ukraine faced harassment, and foreign colleagues with whom she had communicated were detained at the border and interrogated about their relationship with her.³²⁹

³²⁸ Constant Méheut & Daria Mitiuk, “[Bombed by Russia, Odessa Now Wages a Cultural Battle](#),” *New York Times* (5 May 2025).

³²⁹ “[An Open Letter in Defense of Academic Freedom and the Ukrainian Historian Marta Havryshko](#),” *New Global Politics* (22 July 2025); “[UN Calls for Investigation of Ukrainian Digital Blacklist](#),” *Medium* (20 September 2017); Marta Havryshko, “[The Waffen-SS “Galicia” Division: The Dead End of Glorification](#),” *Спільне/Commons* (12 October 2023); Ondřej Bělíček, “[How Ukraine’s Far Right Pushed Its Myths About World War II: An Interview With Marta Havryshko](#),” *Jacobin* (31 December 2024); Marta Havryshko, “[Rechtsextreme in der Ukraine? Nicht nur Kreml-Propaganda, sondern auch ein echtes Problem](#),” *Der Freitag* (19 May 2025).

Occupied Territories

In October 2024, Amnesty International reported that teachers, including history teachers, in Russian-occupied territories were coerced to teach the Russian curriculum – introduced in September 2022 to indoctrinate students with Russian state propaganda – through threats and violence [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*, under Ukraine, and *Annual Reports 2022, 2024*, under Russia]. A forty-year-old history teacher from the Kharkiv region told Amnesty International: “Once the Russians came to search my apartment. I was petrified they would discover the hidden history textbooks, maps, and all the Ukrainian history literature I had. [...] I saw Russian soldiers savaging the school. First thing they did was burn all Ukrainian books, state symbols and maps.” She also recounted the fear that her colleagues who joined the reopened school would inform on her. A 38-year-old teacher of Ukrainian language and literature from the Mykolaiv region declared: “Teachers of Ukrainian and of Ukraine’s history were their main enemies. I explained to my children that they must tell anyone who asks that I was a cleaner at school.”³³⁰

See also France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, United States.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2013, 2016.

UNITED KINGDOM

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998–2001, 2003–2004, 2006–2024.

In [February] 2024, Richard Taylor, a former deputy registrar at Leicester University, sued Steve Coogan in defamation over a film he co-wrote and co-produced, *The Lost King* (released on 7 October 2022), together with his production company Baby Cow, and Pathe Production. “Based on a true story,” the film narrated the archaeological recovery of the remains of Plantagenet King Richard III (1452–1485) by amateur historian Philippa Langley, who found the king’s skeleton under a Leicester car park in 2012, with University of Leicester archaeologists involved in the search. Taylor said that he was

³³⁰ Amnesty International, [School Teacher: A High-Risk Job Under Russian Occupation](#) (London: AI, 2024).

portrayed in a negative way (as “smug,” “dismissive,” “misogynistic,” “weazel-like,” and “patronizing” toward Langley). On 14 June 2024, a High Court judge found the complaint admissible for a trial.³³¹

In late July and early August 2024, far-right, anti-immigration mobs damaged Islamic heritage around the country, after fake news had spread about a fatal incident in which three minors were stabbed:

- On 30 July 2024, a mob of hundreds of people damaged the Islamic Society Mosque in Southport.³³²
- On [30 July] 2024, rioters targeted the Nasir Mosque in Hartlepool.³³³
- On 1 August 2024, a mosque in Shaftesbury Street, Newport, was damaged.³³⁴
- In early August 2024, gravestones in the Muslim section of a cemetery in Burnley were vandalized and splashed with grey paint.³³⁵
- On 4 August 2024, a mob of 700 people targeted the Jamia Masjid Al Madinah Mosque in Middlesbrough. In the weeks after the attack, individuals continued to throw objects at the mosque and attempted to destroy the security cameras.³³⁶
- On 10 August 2024, a petrol bomb was thrown at an Islamic center in Newtownards and graffiti spray-painted on its walls. The bomb failed to ignite.³³⁷

Six years after the 2018 “Windrush Scandal” (exposing how between 1948 and 1981 people, particularly from Caribbean countries, had been wrongly detained, denied legal rights, and threatened with deportation), the Windrush generation was finally seeing steps toward justice. In October 2024, the Labour government announced a commitment to right the wrongs affecting thousands from the Windrush generation, including being denied access to housing, health care, and employment based on mistaken determinations that they were not British citizens. The commitment included funding to facilitate access to the 2019 Windrush compensation scheme and the appointment of a dedicated Windrush commissioner [See NCH *Annual Reports 2019, 2022*].³³⁸

³³¹ Jennifer Harby, “[The Lost King: Legal Action ‘Likely’ against Richard III Film](#),” *BBC News* (8 October 2022); Dan Martin & PA Media, “[Richard III Film Had Defamatory Meaning, Judge Rules](#),” *BBC News* (14 June 2024).

³³² Hayley Coyle, “[Imam Welcomes Emergency Security Offer for Mosques](#),” *BBC News* (5 August 2024).

³³³ Pamela Tickell & Jason Murugesu, “[Community Rallies around Mosque after Disorder](#),” *BBC News* (2 August 2024).

³³⁴ “[Man Due in Court after Mosque Attack](#),” *BBC News* (9 August 2024).

³³⁵ Jonny Humphries, “[Vandalised Muslim Graves Treated as Hate Crime](#),” *BBC News* (5 August 2024); Gary Younge, “[Scapegoating the Immigrant](#),” *New York Review of Books* (17 October 2024), 22.

³³⁶ Nicky Harley, “[Kindness Brings Tears of Joy at Mosques Attacked in UK Riots](#),” *The National* (8 August 2024); “[Mosque Defender among Men Jailed for Disorder](#),” *BBC News* (15 August 2024).

³³⁷ “[Ards Mosque Community ‘Nervous’ after Attack](#),” *BBC News* (11 August 2024).

³³⁸ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 507–508.

In October 2024, Manikarnika Dutta, an assistant professor of history at University College Dublin, Ireland, had her permanent residency request (officially known as Indefinite Leave to Remain) rejected by the Home Office. The rejection cited a violation of the maximum number of days a person is allowed to be outside of the United Kingdom (UK) (548 days per ten years). Dutta, who during this period was writing her doctoral thesis at the University of Oxford on the intersections between British health and maritime policy in colonial India, had been away for archival research and international conferences for 691 days. The Home Office further argued that she did not have a family life in the UK, even though she had been married to Souvik Naha, a senior lecturer in imperial and post-colonial history at the University of Glasgow, for ten years during which they lived together in South East London.³³⁹

In January 2025, historians expressed concern over potential efforts to halt the release of government documents about Queen Elizabeth II (1926–2022; Queen between 1952–2022) and Prince Philip (1921–2021). Under the 1958 Public Records Act documents covering the royal family were exempted from the twenty-year release period for public records of historical significance, instead they had to be reassessed for declassification five years after the royal's death (in 2027 and 2026 respectively). Art historian Bendor Grosnevov, who had resigned from the Advisory Council on National Records and Archives in 2018 in protest against the refusal to declassify documents related to the Profumo Affair – a political scandal that erupted after Conservative Secretary of State of War John Profumo (in office between 1960–1963) was found to have an extramarital affair that allegedly created a security risk – criticized the declassification procedures and called for a radical overhaul. Together with other historians, Grosnevov singled out the Cabinet Office and its close relationships with the royal family. There were further concerns about the National Archives' backlog and its predisposition toward non-disclosure, for example in cases related to the 1953 Regency Act and the Investiture of the Prince of Wales.³⁴⁰

May 2025 research by Alison Hicks, an associate professor of library and information studies at University College London, found an increase in requests to remove books from library shelves throughout 2024 and 2025, likely influenced by book bans in the United States (see below, under *United States*). Hicks's research, which found that mostly LGBTQ+ materials were targeted, supported an August 2024 *Index on Censorship* survey, which had found that 28 of the 53 librarians interviewed had been asked to remove books. A 2023 census of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information

³³⁹ Diane Taylor, "[Oxford Historian Faces Deportation from UK after Doing Research on India ... in India](#)," *Guardian* (16 March 2025).

³⁴⁰ Richard Palmer, "[Fears Grow over Censorship of Secret Queen Elizabeth and Philip Papers](#)," *Guardian* (11 January 2025).

Professionals had similarly found books on race and the history of the British Empire among those requested for removal.³⁴¹

Northern Ireland

In January 2024, Ireland lodged an interstate case against the United Kingdom (UK) at the European Court of Human Rights regarding the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*]. In February and September 2024, the Belfast High Court and Northern Ireland Court of Appeal respectively found the act incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and in breach of the Windsor Framework agreement between the UK and the European Union. Among the findings were that the provisions on immunity from prosecution were incompatible with Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR and Article 2 of the Windsor Framework and should therefore be withdrawn. The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery established by the act was found to be unlawful in relation to participation and disclosure of evidence. The UK government committed to repealing some, but not all, elements of the act and signaled that it wanted to appeal to the Supreme Court.³⁴²

See also Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Belize, Cameroon, China, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, Zambia.

UNITED NATIONS / INTERNATIONAL

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2022–2024.

On 12 September 2024, during a side event to the 57th Human Rights Council, former acting United States Archivist (1993–1995) and President of the International Conference of the Round Table on Archives (1993–1995), Trudy Huskamp Peterson called upon United Nations (UN) Secretary General António Guterres and UN High Commissioner of Human Rights Volker Türk to establish a working group to develop a durable solution for archiving the records of six temporary international criminal

³⁴¹ Sarah Shaffi, “[Third of UK Librarians Asked to Censor or Remove Books, Research Reveals](#),” *Guardian* (20 April 2023); Katie Dancy-Downs, “[Banned: School Librarians Shushed over LGBT+ Books](#),” *Index on Censorship* (19 August 2024); Ella Creamer, “[Librarians in UK Increasingly Asked to Remove Books, As Influence of US Pressure Groups Spreads](#),” *Guardian* (14 April 2025); Alison Hicks, “Understanding Risk: Book Bans and Censorship in UK School Libraries,” in Alison Hicks, *Risk-Informed Information Practice: Ways of Knowing in an Uncertain World* (London: Routledge, 2025).

³⁴² Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 56, 384.

tribunals (the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia [ICTY], the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda [ICTR], the Special Court for Sierra Leone [SCSL], the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia [ECCC], the Special Tribunal for Lebanon [STL], and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers [KSC]) and of newly-created institutions like the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria (IIIM) and the OHCHR [Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights] Sri Lanka Accountability Project. At the time of the event, records were stored at various spaces without any long-term solutions in place, and with the UN understaffed, inexperienced in handling court records, and lacking facilities.³⁴³

On 17 December 2024, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled “Combating Glorification of Nazism, Neo-Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance” for the thirteenth consecutive year. Among the history- and memory-related paragraphs were the following:

- It “[n]otes with alarm that the Russian Federation has sought to justify its territorial aggression against Ukraine on the purported basis of eliminating neo-Nazism, and underlines that the pretextual use of neo-Nazism to justify territorial aggression seriously undermines genuine attempts to combat neo-Nazism” [See NCH *Annual Report 2022* under *Russia*];
- It “[e]ncourages States to ... [monitor] closely the phenomenon of Nazism, neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial, such as commemorative celebration of the Nazi regime;”
- It “[e]xpresses deep concern about increased frequency of ... activities intended to desecrate or demolish monuments erected in remembrance of those who fought against Nazism during the Second World War, as well as to unlawfully exhume or remove the remains of such persons;”
- It “[w]elcomes efforts by Member States to preserve historical truth, including through constructing and preserving monuments and memorials dedicated to those who fought in the ranks of the anti-Hitler coalition;”
- It “[e]ncourages States to take appropriate concrete measures ... in order to prevent revisionism in respect of the Second World War and the denial of the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the Second World War;
- It “[c]alls upon States to take active measures to ensure that education systems develop the necessary content to provide accurate accounts of history;”

³⁴³ International Council of Archives, [Newsletter from the Section on Archives and Human Rights](#) (September 2024), 1–2.

- It “[r]ecalls ... that education ... should include accurate ... accounts of national history ... that expose the untruths of those who attempt to write ethnic groups out of national histories and identities in order to sustain ethnonationalist myths of racially or ethnically “pure” nations;”
- It “[c]ondemns without reservation any denial of or attempt to deny the Holocaust;”
- It “[a]ffirms its deep commitment to the duty of remembrance, and welcomes the call of the Special Rapporteur [on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance] for the active preservation of ... Holocaust sites;”
- It “[r]ecalls the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur that revisionism and attempts to falsify history may, in certain circumstances, fall under the prohibition of hate speech under article 4 (a) of the Convention [the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination];”
- It “[s]tresses the need to respect the memory and that the practices described above do injustice to the memory of the countless victims of crimes against humanity committed in the Second World War;”
- It “[e]mphasizes the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur ... in which he emphasized the importance of history classes in teaching the dramatic events and human suffering which arose out of the adoption of ideologies such as Nazism and Fascism.”³⁴⁴

The resolution was adopted with 119 votes in favor, 53 against, and 10 abstentions.

UNITED STATES

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1995–2024.

After the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing mass bombardment of Gaza by Israeli forces, the Canary Mission – a doxing website set up in 2014 to document what it perceived as antisemitism among academics and students in the United States and Canada, but widely criticized as weaponizing antisemitism to suppress criticism of Israel – greatly expanded its database, including those who participated in protests and signed letters in support of Palestine following the eruption of the Gaza war (2023–). The list included many undergraduate and graduate students of history and

³⁴⁴ “[Combating Glorification of Nazism, Neo-Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance](#),” *United Nations General Assembly* (Resolution 79/160) (19 December 2024), 4, 12, 16, 18, 23–28, 32, 51. All previous resolutions at [United Nations General Assembly Resolutions Related to History and Memory \(1946–Present\)](#), *Network of Concerned Historians* (ongoing database); [UN General Assembly Resolutions Tables](#) (ongoing database).

history professors, including from Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Ann Arbor. Several reports indicated that being featured in the Canary Mission's database could make it harder to find a job in North America as well as Israel, as the website would be among the first featured on a Google web search, and was used by several Israeli offices to complicate or block entrance into Israel.

On 24 March 2025, Canary Mission launched a separate page titled "Uncovering Foreign Nationals Who Could Qualify Under Trump's Executive Order," referring to President Donald Trump's 30 January 2025 Executive Order "Combatting Anti-Semitism in the United States," which set out to "investigate and punish anti-Jewish racism in leftist, anti-American colleges and universities... [and] demands the removal of resident aliens who violate our laws." As of 31 March 2025, the list featured seven current and former students and professors, including Audra Simpson, professor of anthropology at Columbia University, whose *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* traced the history of the resistance by the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke First Nation people against centuries of settler-colonial violence.³⁴⁵

In 2024, Indigenous groups and partners continued the fight to halt the construction of a lithium mine by Lithium Americas at Peehee Mu'huh ("Rotten Moon," also known as Thacker Pass) in Nevada. The pass had long been a sacred site for various Indigenous groups. It was also the site where on 12 September 1865 federal soldiers in the 1st Nevada Cavalry massacred members of the Numu (or Paiute) Indigenous group, killing at least fifty, including women and children. In February 2023, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and Summit Lake Paiute Tribe had issued a request to the Interior Department to have the site designated under the National Register of Historic Places.³⁴⁶

On 10 June 2024, the University of Minnesota announced that it would pause the search for a new director of its Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (CHGS) after it unilaterally rescinded the job offer to Raz Segal, Associate Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies and Endowed Professor in the Study of Modern Genocide at Stockton University, Galloway, NJ. Segal had called Israel's conduct of the Gaza war "a textbook case of genocide" in an October 2023 article in a Jewish magazine, which had prompted two longtime advisory board members, Bruno Chaouat and Karen Painter, to resign in protest.

³⁴⁵ James Bamford, "[Who Is Funding Canary Mission? Inside the Doxxing Operation Targeting Anti-Zionist Students and Professors](#)," *The Nation* (22 December 2023); Stephanie Saul, "[A Mysterious Group Says Its Mission Is to Expose Antisemitic Students](#)," *New York Times* (1 April 2025); Sophie Hurwitz, "[How a Shadowy Online Blacklist Became a Legal Threat to Pro-Palestinian Activists](#)," *Mother Jones* (8 July 2025); W.J.T. Mitchell, "[The Trolls of Academe: Making Safe Spaces into Brave Spaces](#)," *Los Angeles Review of the Books* (5 January 2018); Noa Landau, "[Official Documents Prove: Israel Bans Young Americans Based on Canary Mission Website](#)," *Haaretz* (4 October 2018).

³⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 511; Michael Sainato, "['We Were Not Consulted': Native Americans Fight Lithium Mine on Site of 1865 Massacre](#)," *Guardian* (13 October 2023).

Organizations and media outlets based outside the university, including the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas, then launched a campaign to block Segal's appointment. The University of Minnesota faculty passed votes of no confidence in both Interim President Jeff Ettinger and Provost Rachel Croson for their actions against Segal.³⁴⁷

On 12 June 2024, the Oklahoma Supreme Court dismissed a lawsuit for reparations, brought in 2020 under the public nuisance law by three survivors of the so-called 1921 Tulsa massacre, when an estimated 300 black Americans were killed as a white mob razed the Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma. "Though Plaintiffs' grievances are legitimate, they do not fall within the scope of our State's public nuisance statute," the court wrote. In doing so, it affirmed a lower court judge's ruling in July 2023 which had concluded that "simply being connected to a historical event does not provide a person with unlimited rights to seek compensation." [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*]. Calling the decision a miscarriage of justice, the survivors requested a federal investigation. On [30] September 2024, the Justice Department announced an investigation into the massacre. On 1 June 2025, the 104th anniversary of the massacre, the city government unveiled a reparations project titled Road to Repair. It included the establishment of a private charitable trust aimed at raising US\$ 105 million by 1 June 2026 and the intention to declassify 45,000 pages of historical documents related to the massacre.³⁴⁸

On 14 June 2024, the Oklahoma City federal court issued a partial preliminary injunction against HB 1775, which sought to restrict the teaching of race and gender in K-12 schools [See NCH *Annual Report 2022*]. The court argued that several of the law's provisions were vaguely worded, making it difficult for teachers to understand what they could and could not teach. It also provided guidance on the meaning of several of the law's provisions. The Attorney General announced an appeal.³⁴⁹

On 15 July 2024, federal judge in Florida, Aileen Cannon, dismissed the classified documents case against Donald Trump (president between 2017–2021 and since 2025) on the grounds that special counsel Jack

³⁴⁷ Jessica Blake, "[University of Minnesota Pauses Search for Holocaust Center Director](#)," *Inside HigherEd* (12 June 2024); Middle East Studies Association of North America Committee on Academic Freedom, "[Letter to the University of Minnesota Regarding Its Decision to Rescind a Job Offer to Dr. Raz Segal](#)" (18 June 2024); Todd Wolfson, "[University of Minnesota Should Reinstate Raz Segal Job Offer](#)," *American Association of University Professors* (14 October 2024); Anemona Hartocollis, "[Professors in Trouble Over Protests Wonder If Academic Freedom Is Dying](#)," *New York Times* (23 October 2024).

³⁴⁸ Sam Cabral, "[Oklahoma Court Rejects Tulsa Massacre Survivors Suit](#)," *BBC News* (13 June 2024); Audra Burch, "[Justice Department to Analyze the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre](#)," *New York Times* (30 September 2024); Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (Washington: HRW, 2025), 510; Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London: AI, 2025), 389; Audra Burch, "[\\$105 Million Reparations Package for Tulsa Race Massacre Unveiled by Mayor](#)," *New York Times* (1 June 2025).

³⁴⁹ Cassidy Fallik, "[Federal Court Partially Halts Oklahoma's Classroom Censorship Law](#)," *ACLU Oklahoma* (17 June 2024); Nuria Martinez-Keel, "[Oklahoma Attorney General Appeals HB 1775 Court Ruling](#)," *Oklahoma Voice* (16 July 2024).

Smith had been unlawfully appointed by the Justice Department. On 26 August, the Justice Department authorized Smith to appeal to a federal court to resume the case, saying that Cannon's view "deviated" from legal precedent and "took an inadequate account" of the history of legally-appointed special counsels [See *NCH Annual Reports 2021–2024*]. On 26 November, Smith dropped the appeal to continue the case against Trump, but continued an appeal against Cannon's decision.

On 21 January 2025, the day after Donald Trump's inauguration as president, Cannon stopped the Justice Department from releasing to Congress a potentially damning classified documents section of a two-volume report by Smith, detailing his lengthy investigation into Trump's mishandling of classified documents. On 29 January, federal prosecutors asked a federal appeals court in Atlanta to dismiss an appeal they had made before Trump took office as president to reinstate criminal charges against two of his alleged accomplices, Walt Nauta and Carlos de Oliveira, after Cannon had dismissed all charges in the case.³⁵⁰

A 30 July 2024, the Interior Department published its final report on the Federal Indian Boarding School system – a government policy (1871–1969) of forced assimilation in which Indigenous children were forcibly abducted, abused, starved, forced to cut their hair and forbidden from speaking their language. It found at least 74 marked and unmarked burials at 65 different schools across the country, adding that at least 973 children had died, including from disease and abuse. It called on the government to apologize and invest US\$ 23 billion (the equivalent of government expenses into the system between 1871 and 1969) in the present-day impacts of the Boarding School system on families and communities [See *NCH Annual Reports 2023–2024*].

On 22 May 2025, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes of Oklahoma filed a class-action lawsuit against the Department of Interior, its Bureau of Indian Affairs, its Bureau of Indian Education, and Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, claiming "irreparable injuries" suffered by Native nations across the country whose children had been forced into the Boarding School system and demanding the government to account for expenses on the system, and publish how much had been generated by the sales of Native lands.³⁵¹

³⁵⁰ District Court Southern District of Florida, [United States versus Donald Trump and others](#) (2024); Eric Tucker, "[Federal Judge Dismisses Trump Classified Documents Case over Concerns with Prosecutor's Appointment](#)," *AP* (15 July 2024); Madeline Halpert, Ana Faguy & Anthony Zurcher, "[Trump Classified Documents Case Dismissed by Florida Judge](#)," *BBC News* (14 July 2024); Max Matza, "[Special Counsel Appeals to Resume Trump Documents Case](#)," *BBC News* (26 August 2024); Alan Feuer, "[Judge Stops Justice Dept. From Releasing Report on Trump Documents Case](#)," *New York Times* (21 January 2025); Alan Feuer, "[Prosecutors Move to Drop Classified Documents Case Against Trump's Co-Defendants](#)," *New York Times* (29 January 2025); Josh Gerstein & Kyle Cheney, "[Appeals Court Grants DOJ Bid to Drop Prosecution of Trump's Former Co-Defendants in Classified Docs Case](#)," *Politico* (11 February 2025); Michael D. Shear, "[F.B.I. Returns Materials Taken From Mar-a-Lago to Trump](#)," *New York Times* (28 February 2025).

³⁵¹ "[Federal Investigation Finds At Least 973 Children Died in Federal Indian Boarding Schools](#)," *Equal Justice Initiative* (31 July 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025),

On 19 August 2024, the trial about the diaries of former Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Member Li Rui (1917–2019) involving the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the leading archive for CCP history in the United States (US), and Li’s widow Zhang Yuzhen began in California. Li, a long-term senior CCP member of the liberal and reformist faction and briefly the personal secretary of Mao Zedong (1893–1976) in 1958, meticulously kept diaries between 1935–2018, including a first-hand account of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. In March 2019, following Li’s death, Zhang’s legal team asserted her ownership of Li’s diaries and requested their return from the Hoover Institution. This followed two previous lawsuits in Beijing, one by Zhang and one by one of Li’s daughters, which had resulted in rulings that the materials should be returned. Zhang’s lawyers argued that the diaries’ presence in the Hoover Institution violated her privacy. Lawyers for Stanford, on the other hand, argued that the diaries had been scanned, transcribed, cataloged, and eventually donated from 2014 by one of Li’s daughters, Li Nanyang, an outspoken critic of the CCP who lived and worked in the US, who feared that otherwise the diaries would be banned or destroyed by the CCP. They further argued that Zhang’s claim seemed to be organized by the CCP government, pointing to legal fees that could not be brought up by Zhang herself. Under Xi Jinping’s policy against “historical nihilism,” many archives had been closed and access to archival documents denied [See NCH *Annual Reports 2017–2018, 2021, 2024* under China]. The Tiananmen Square Massacre was among several historical events written out of the country’s history [See NCH *Annual Report 1996* under Hong Kong, *Annual Reports 1997–2012, 2014–2015, 2017–2024* under China]. Both parties presented citations from Li’s diaries in support of their case.³⁵²

On 29 August 2024, the University of Virginia (UVA) suspended a longstanding campus tour organized by the University Guide Service (UGS) and ran by student volunteers for prospective students and their families, because, according to a university spokesperson, they were concerned that the UGS had insufficient capacity and that the information provided was not consistent. The decision followed a campaign that had been going on for several years by the Jefferson Council, an organization of conservative alumni, who had criticized the tour for being a “woke version of UVA history” and for violating the legacy of UVA’s founder, Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826; in office between 1801–1809), primary author of the United States Declaration of Independence and former President, by emphasizing that he was a slaveholder. In June 2024, the Council’s President Tom Neal had requested the university to sever its ties with the UGS in an open letter to Republican State Governor Glenn Youngkin. In late June, Youngkin had selected a new set of appointees to the UVA’s governing board of trustees, increasing the share of his appointees to thirteen out of the seventeen board members. The UGS declined to comment,

40, 389; Jack Healy, “[Native Tribes Sue U.S. Over Abuse and Deaths at Boarding Schools](#),” *New York Times* (22 May 2025).

³⁵² Amy Hawkins, “[‘Monument to History’ Battle between US and China over Future of Mao’s Secretary’s Diary](#),” *Guardian* (18 August 2024); Tessa Wong, “[US Trial Begins in Battle for Mao Secretary’s Diaries](#),” *BBC News* (20 August 2024).

but stated that it would work with the university to reinstate the volunteer tours in the spring semester, “so long as this relationship does not harm our ability to share an honest and complete account of UVa and its history.”³⁵³

In June 2020, publishing companies Hachette, Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, and Wiley sued the California-based NGO Internet Archive (established in 1996) because its Open Library and National Emergency Library facilitated copyright infringement by making digital copies of their (older) books freely available. Likewise, in August 2023, record labels Universal Music, Sony Music, and Concord sued the Internet Archive because its Great 78 Project facilitated copyright infringement by digitizing and making their pre-1972 78rpm phonographic records freely available. The Internet Archive argued that digitization for preservation and access was covered by the fair use clause of copyright law. The Internet Archive lost the books case in March 2023 and on appeal in September 2024. The records case was still pending in the summer of 2025. The Internet Archive warned that losing the records case and having to pay prohibitive damages would threaten its very existence and that of its Wayback machine (a public service founded in 2001 and used by millions every day to access historical snapshots of the internet).³⁵⁴

In September 2024, a resident of Montgomery, Texas, filed a request to reclassify Linda Coombs’s *Colonization and the Wampanoag Story* (Penguin Random House, 2023), a children’s history book about the colonization of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous Americans, as fiction in Montgomery’s children’s libraries. The decision was approved without consultation of librarians by a citizens review panel that had initially been set up to review books considered to be “sexually explicit,” but that had reportedly recently extended its mandate. The decision was decried by Penguin Random House, anti-censorship advocates including PEN America, and the Texas Indigenous Council, one of whose members said the decision fitted Texas’s long history of “whitewashing” Indigenous history. According to PEN America, Texas had the second most book bans between July 2021 and December 2023 (1,567 titles removed), only trailing to Florida (5,107 titles removed) [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*]. A petition by the National Campaign of Justice calling for the reinstatement of the book in the nonfiction collection had received more than 35,000 signatures as of 23 October 2024.³⁵⁵

On 9 September 2024, director of the National Security Archive’s Chile Documentation Project Peter Kornbluh reiterated the 2023 call by Chilean President Gabriel Boric for the government and Central

³⁵³ Stephanie Saul, “[University of Virginia Suspends Tours Criticized for Emphasizing Ties to Slavery](#),” *New York Times* (29 August 2024).

³⁵⁴ “[Defend the Internet Archive](#)” (petition) ([16 April 2025]); Chris Freeland, “[Take Action: Defend the Internet Archive](#),” *Internet Archive Blogs* (17 April 2025).

³⁵⁵ Richard Luscombe, “[Texas Condemned for Placing Book on Colonization in Library’s Fiction Section](#),” *Guardian* (21 October 2024).

Intelligence Agency to release remaining classified documents related to the 1973 coup that overthrew and led to the death of the democratically elected President Salvador Allende (1908–1973) and established a junta (1973–1990) led by General Augusto Pinochet (1915–2006) [See NCH *Annual Report 2023* under United States, *Annual Report 2024* under Chile].³⁵⁶

On 19 September 2024, the American Historical Association (AHA) published a report, *American Lesson Plan: Teaching US History in Secondary Schools*, which was the result of a survey in 2022–2024 among over 3,000 middle and high school US history teachers, more than 200 interviews, and a review of thousands of pages of instructional materials from school districts across the United States. One of the major results was that the AHA did not find evidence for indoctrination, politicization, or deliberate classroom malpractice, adding that a lack of resources, instructional time, and professional respect represented far clearer threats to the integrity of history education across the United States.³⁵⁷

According to a PEN America statement on 23 September 2024, among the more than 10,000 books banned in schools in the United States in 2023–2024 were *Roots: The Saga of An American Family* (Garden City 1976), a novel by Alex Haley (1921–1992), and *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880*, by historian W.E.B. DuBois (1868–1963). *Roots* had previously been banned in Apartheid South Africa on the grounds that for black viewers “the polarization of racial feelings was likely to be intensified.” The Marxist-inspired *Black Reconstruction* appeared in May 1935, but had been ignored by many (though not all) white historians until its 1964 reprint.

On 24 January 2025, President Donald Trump (in office between 2017–2021 and since 2025) dismantled a monitoring position at the Department of Education, which had been charged in 2023 by the administration of then President Joe Biden (in office between 2021–2025) to keep track of and investigate book bans [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*].³⁵⁸

In the fall of 2024, the museum of the National Archives and Records Administration reportedly attempted to de-emphasize negative parts of United States history. This reportedly included a removal from planned exhibits of references (including photographs) to civil rights activists such as Martin

³⁵⁶ Peter Kornbluh, “[The CIA-in-Chile Scandal at 50](#),” *National Security Archive* (9 September 2024).

³⁵⁷ American Historical Association, [American Lesson Plan: Teaching US History in Secondary Schools: What Are American Students Learning about US History?](#) (Washington: AHA, 2024); Nicholas Kryczka & Others, [American Lesson Plan Teaching US History in Secondary Schools: A Report by the American Historical Association](#) (Washington: AHA, 2024).

³⁵⁸ PEN America, [Memo on School Book Bans](#) (23 September 2024), 5; W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (originally 1935) (Cleveland/New York 1964) 713; Mahesh Rao, “Roots, Alex Haley,” *Index on Censorship*, 46, no. 3 (Autumn 2017), 69; Zach Montague, “[Education Dept. Ends Book Ban Investigations](#),” *New York Times* (24 January 2025); PEN America, [PEN America Index Of School Book Bans: 2023–2024](#) (ongoing).

Luther King Jr. (1929–1968), to Japanese internment during World War II, to the displacement of Native Americans, to union organizers, to environmental hazards caused by the mining industry, and to birth control. A proposed exhibit exploring changes to the Constitution since 1787, including “amendments abolishing slavery and expanding the right to vote,” was reportedly reduced in size, and employees were told that “focusing on the amendments portrayed the Founding Fathers in a negative light.”³⁵⁹

On 4 October 2024, the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, canceled a lecture by Ruth Ben-Ghiat, a professor of history at New York University specialized in the history of Fascism, scheduled for 10 October, after a lobby campaign by right-wing outlets and Republican Representative of Texas, Keith Self. Ben-Ghiat, who had been invited to speak as part of an annual lecture series, had planned to give a talk titled “Militaries and Authoritarian Regimes: Coups, Corruption, and the Costs of Losing Democracy” on the history of military takeovers in Italy (1922) and Chile (1973). In the lead-up to the 2024 election, Ben-Ghiat had been repeatedly critical of President Donald Trump and what she saw as his authoritarian tendencies, but had stated that her lecture would not discuss American politics (which was forbidden under the Hatch Act). After the cancellation, a group of seventeen Congressional Republicans send a letter to Vice Admiral Yvette M. Davids, the academy’s superintendent, expressing concern about “the academy’s process for choosing guest speakers.”³⁶⁰

On 10 November 2024, New College of Florida in Sarasota [See NCH *Annual Report 2023*] announced a course on “wokeness” to be taught in January 2025 by comedian, conservative commentator, and Oxford-trained historian Andrew Doyle. The course would present the “Woke” movement as an “essentially illiberal” “kind of cult” and would include as an example readings of historian Ibram X. Kendi, who had previously been the target of several book bans [See NCH *Annual Reports 2022–2023*].³⁶¹

On 19 November 2024, the Texas State Board of Education passed (8 in favor, 7 against) a preliminary vote on a new elementary school curriculum that would devote more space to Christianity and the Bible. The curriculum, which would be optional but come with financial incentives for adopting it, would be available from August 2025 onward and serve about 2.3 million public-school students in kindergarten through fifth grade. In a statement, Republic Governor Greg Abbott praised the curriculum for allowing “students to better understand the connection of history, art, community, literature and religion on pivotal

³⁵⁹ Nathan Robinson, “[It’s Going to Take a Constant Fight to Preserve the Historical Record](#),” *Current Affairs* (31 October 2024).

³⁶⁰ John Ismay, “[From Book Bans to Canceled Lectures, the Naval Academy Is Bending to Trump](#),” *New York Times* (24 April 2025).

³⁶¹ Ian Hodgson, “[New College of Florida Offers Course in ‘Woke’ Movement](#),” *Tampa Bay Times* (12 November 2024).

events like the signing of the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Movement and the American Revolution.” Critics, however, cited a disbalance between the attention paid to Christianity and other religions in education and pointed to a “whitewashing of the negative details of Christian history.” The curriculum included a fifth-grade unit on racial justice to teach students that former President Abraham Lincoln (in office between 1861–1865) was motivated by “a deep Christian faith” in advocating for abolition, without mentioning that many other Christians equally drew on their religion to defend slavery and segregation.³⁶²

On 21 November 2024, the National Security Archive (NSA) filed suit in federal court to contest the estimated twelve-year backlog of Freedom of Information requests for presidential records held by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). In November 2023, the NSA had filed a Freedom of Information request with the Bush Library in Dallas, Texas, to consult 73 telephone call transcripts (“telcons”) between then President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2001–2008, along with the meeting transcripts (“memcons”) of the 19 face-to-face meetings between them. These records were in NARA custody. In June 2024, the Bush Library had informed NSA that “our best estimate at this time is that it may be completed in approximately 12 years.” Summaries of any of the requested documents were already available on the Kremlin website, demonstrating that the telcons and memcons no longer deserved withholding or security classification.³⁶³

After the Florida Board of Education removed a sociology course at twelve universities on 24 January 2024 [See below and *NCH Annual Report 2024*], other courses, including history courses, were also affected. The statute that allowed the measure aimed to weed out general education courses “based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States” and barred professors from teaching courses in general education based on “unproven, speculative, or exploratory content.” At least 39 courses at Florida International University (FIU) were marked as not complying with the statute, with 21 courses ultimately being marked as “ok with proposed revisions,” and twelve marked for removal from general education. Across FIU, administrators and professors said that there was a pervasive environment of fear, self-censorship and brain drain. Many courses had been forced to add the term “Western canon” to their description, an idea that referred to works that shaped the development of Western civilization and thought, although the statute provided no definition for “Western canon.”³⁶⁴

³⁶² Troy Closson, “[Texas Education Board Backs Curriculum With Lessons Drawn From Bible](#),” *New York Times* (19 November 2024).

³⁶³ District Court for District of Columbia, [National Security Archive versus National Archives and Records Administration: Complaint](#) (21 November 2024); “[National Security Archive Files Lawsuit Against 12-Year Freedom of Information Backlog](#),” *National Security Archive* (21 November 2024).

³⁶⁴ Clara-Sophia Daly, “[Florida Politics Is Seeping into FIU Curriculum – Enraged Professors Call It Censorship](#),” *Miami Herald* (24 November 2024).

On 5 January 2025, after a contentious debate, the American Historical Association (AHA) adopted a resolution introduced by the group Historians for Peace and Democracy (HPD) to oppose “scholasticide” (the intentional destruction of the education system) in Gaza during its annual meeting in New York by a vote of 428 to 88. The resolution referred to an April 2024 statement of United Nations rapporteurs saying that “the pattern of attacks on schools, universities, teachers, and students in the Gaza Strip” including “the killing of 261 teachers and 95 university professors ... may constitute an intentional effort to comprehensively destroy the Palestinian education system, an action known as scholasticide.” The resolution also mentioned the destruction by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) of Gaza’s archives, libraries, cultural centers, museums, bookstores, heritage sites, and places of worship and the displacement of Gaza’s people, leading to the loss of educational and research materials, “which would extinguish the future study of Palestinian history” [see also under *Palestine*]. It condemned “the Israeli violence in Gaza” that “undermined” “the right of all peoples to freely teach and learn about their past” and called “for a permanent ceasefire to halt the scholasticide.” On 6 January 2025, the resolution moved to the AHA Council, which could endorse, veto or decline to concur.

On 17 January 2025, the AHA Council vetoed the resolution (11–4–1) arguing that it contravened the AHA constitution and bylaws, because it lay outside the scope of the AHA mission and purpose. In a reaction, the HPD argued that the AHA Council had approved similar resolutions about other countries in the past (about the United States invasion of Iraq [2003–2011] in 2007 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine [2022–present] in 2022), and therefore acted inconsistently.³⁶⁵

On 16 January 2025, a group of Florida professors filed a federal lawsuit in an attempt to block a 2023 law (SB 266), banning funding for public college and university diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs. Among others, the challenged law prohibited courses that included “theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, and economic inequities,” adding that such course materials “may not distort significant historical events or include a curriculum that teaches identity politics” [See also above

³⁶⁵ American Historical Association, “[Resolution to Oppose Scholasticide in Gaza](#)” (for consideration at the January 2025 business meeting) (2024); Jennifer Schuessler, “[Historians’ Group Votes to Condemn ‘Scholasticide’ in Gaza](#),” *New York Times* (6 January 2025); Pamela Paul “[Historians Condemn Israel’s ‘Scholasticide’: The Question Is Why](#),” *New York Times* (9 January 2025); Historians for Peace and Democracy, “[A Resolution to Oppose Scholasticide in Gaza](#)” (no date [2024]); “[UN Experts Deeply Concerned Over ‘Scholasticide’ in Gaza](#)” (press release) (18 April 2024); Scholars against the War on Palestine, [Tool Kit: International Actions against Scholasticide](#) (14–29 February 2024); American Historical Association, “[Update as of January 17, 2025](#)” (17 January 2025); Steering Committee of Historians for Peace and Democracy, “[Historians for Peace and Democracy Responds to the AHA’s Veto of the Scholasticide Resolution](#),” (17 January 2025); Jennifer Schuessler, “[Leaders of Historians’ Group Veto Measure Condemning ‘Scholasticide’ in Gaza](#),” *New York Times* (17 January 2025); Ryan Quinn, “[Historians’ Council Vetoes Gaza Scholasticide Condemnation](#),” *Inside HigherEd* (17 January 2025); Barbara Weinstein, “[What Is the Role of the Historian?](#),” *History News Network* (4 February 2025).

and NCH *Annual Report 2024*].³⁶⁶

After returning to power on 20 January 2025, President Donald Trump (in office between 2017–2021 and since 2025) issued several decrees and proclamations changing or creating new national holidays:

- On 9 February 2025, he issued a proclamation to make 9 February “Gulf of America Day,” following his 20 January Executive Order “Restoring Names that Honor American Greatness” which had unilaterally changed the name of Gulf of Mexico into Gulf of America (a decision not recognized by other countries or international organizations).³⁶⁷
- On 27 April 2025, he declared “reinstating Columbus Day” – an internationally celebrated holiday commemorating Christopher Columbus’s (1451–1506) arrival in the Americas on 12 October 1492, criticized as a pivotal event in European colonialism – as a federal holiday. The declaration was reportedly a reaction against a 2021 proclamation by then President Joe Biden (in office between 2021–2025), which formally recognized Indigenous Peoples’ Day as a day to “honor America’s first inhabitants and the Tribal Nations that continue to thrive today,” but left Columbus Day in place as a federal holiday.³⁶⁸
- On [1] May 2025, he vowed to rename “Veterans Day” – an 11 November annual holiday to commemorate all United States (US) military veterans – “Victory Day for World War I,” drawing criticism from veterans’ organizations. On 8 May, he announced changing “Victory in Europe Day” – commemorating the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany on 8 May 1945 – to “Victory Day for World War II,” thus erasing the period until the 2 September 1945 surrender of Imperial Japan, including the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by US forces.³⁶⁹
- On 19 June 2025, also known as Juneteenth – a federal holiday to commemorate the 1865 emancipation of enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, marking the formal end of slavery in the US – he complained that there were “too many non-working holidays in America,” in what critics saw as part of a campaign to minimize Black history that further included, among other things, eliminating online references to Black historical figures and banning books about Black history.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ District Court for Northern District of Florida, [Sharon Austin and Others versus Board of Governors of the State University System and Others](#) (16 January 2025); Douglas Soule, “‘An Alarming Overreach’: Florida Professors Sue over DeSantis-Signed DEI Restrictions,” *Florida Today* ([16] January 2025).

³⁶⁷ The White House, [Gulf of America Day, 2025](#) (proclamation; 9 February 2025); Liv McMahon, “[Google Maps Blocks Gulf of America Reviews after Rename Criticism](#),” *BBC News* (13 February 2025).

³⁶⁸ Ali Watkins, “[Fact-Checking Trump’s Claims About Columbus Day](#),” *New York Times* (28 April 2025).

³⁶⁹ Qasim Nauman, “[Trump Says May 8 Will Be ‘Victory Day for World War II’](#),” *New York Times* (2 May 2025); Karoun Demirjian & John Ismay, “[Veterans’ Groups Object to Trump’s Proposal to Rename Veterans Day](#),” *New York Times* (2 May 2025).

³⁷⁰ Erica L. Green, “[How Trump Treats Black History Differently than Other Parts of America’s Past](#),” *New York Times* (20 June 2025).

On 21 January 2025, the first meeting of a class about the History of Modern Israel by historian Avi Shilon at Columbia University, New York, was interrupted by a group of four masked protesters who distributed violent anti-Israel and anti-Zionist leaflets. One student was identified and suspended.³⁷¹

To comply with President Donald Trump's Executive Orders to terminate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and "gender ideology extremism," official institutions censored parts of their historical materials (some of which were restored after protests):

- In January 2025, the National Cryptologic Museum in Fort Meade, Maryland, temporarily covered plaques honoring women and people of color who served on the National Security Agency and who were described in the museum's Hall of Honor as "trailblazers in U.S. cryptologic history," with brown paper.³⁷²
- In February 2025, the Defense Department ("Pentagon") marked for deletion tens of thousands of photos – including references to World War II Medal of Honor recipient Harold Gonsalves; the Enola Gay aircraft that dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on 6 August 1945 [See *NCH Annual Report 1995*]; the Tuskegee Airmen (the first Black military pilots who served in a segregated World War II unit); the first women to pass Marine infantry training – and online posts that mentioned various commemorative months (Women's History Month, Black History Month, and Hispanic Heritage Month). The Air Force paused the use of an instructional video for trainees about the accomplishments of the first Black pilots in the military.³⁷³
- In [February] 2025, the National Park Service changed its webpage about the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, stripping all references to transgender people and changing the acronym LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) to LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual). By June, it had also removed the "L.G.B.T.Q. America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History" webpage, which featured an academic study that, among other things, identified people, places, and events that shaped the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.³⁷⁴
- On 2 February 2025, a *New York Times* report found that more than 8,000 government web pages had been removed since the 20 January presidential inauguration of Donald Trump, including a Justice Department database tracking criminal charges and convictions linked to the 6 January 2021 attack on

³⁷¹ Jeff Winter, "[Columbia University Suspends One Student as It Expedites Investigation into Israeli History Class Disruption](#)," *CNN* (24 January 2025).

³⁷² Frank Langfitt, "[NSA Museum Covered Plaques Honoring Women and People of Color, Provoking an Uproar](#)," *NPR* (5 February 2025).

³⁷³ Tara Copp, Lolita Baldor & Kevin Vineys, "[War Heroes and Military Firsts Are Among 26,000 Images Flagged for Removal in Pentagon's DEI Purge](#)," *AP News* (7 March 2025); Tim Balk, "[Jackie Robinson's Legacy Vanishes, Then Reappears, on Pentagon Site](#)," *New York Times* (19 March 2025).

³⁷⁴ Juliana Kim, "[Park Service Erases 'Transgender' on Stonewall Website, Uses the Term 'LGB' Movement](#)," *NPR* (14 February 2025); Lisa Friedman, "[National Parks Are Told to Delete Content That 'Disparages Americans'](#)," *New York Times* (13 June 2025).

the Capitol.³⁷⁵

- In March 2025, Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, operated by the Army, removed from its website guides focused on the graves of Black soldiers, women’s military service, and veterans of the Civil War (1860–1865), including a lesson plan on the Reconstruction period (1865–1877). It also removed the “Women’s History” webpage and references to Seraph Young Ford (1846–1938), the first woman to vote under Utah’s 1870 equal suffrage law. The removal sparked outrage, including from Utah’s Republican Lieutenant Governor Deirdre Henderson. The references to Ford were reinstated, but the women’s history page remained removed.³⁷⁶
- On 10 March 2025, construction began to remove a Washington D.C. street mural commemorating the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd (1973–2020) by a police officer. A week prior, Republican Member of Congress for Georgia, Andrew Clyde, had introduced a bill to make federal funding for Washington D.C. dependent upon the mural’s removal.³⁷⁷
- On 15 March 2025, the Defense Department removed webpages celebrating the Navajo Code Talkers (American Indians who used their tribal language to send secret communications on the battlefield) and Major General Charles Calvin Rogers (1929–1990), the highest-ranking African American to receive a Medal of Honor. The Rogers webpage showed a 404 error message and the URL was changed to include “deimedal” (“diversity, equity, and inclusion medal.”) Throughout 18 March, the website devoted to World War II veteran and Major League Baseball player Jackie Robinson disappeared.³⁷⁸
- On 4 April 2025, the United States (US) National Park Service reportedly began scrubbing information from its exhibits about Harriet Tubman (1823–1913) and the Underground Railroad – one of the most significant stories of resistance against chattel slavery in the US.³⁷⁹

On 29 January 2025, President Donald Trump issued Executive Order “Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling.” The order sought to withhold federal funding for K-12 (“from kindergarten to 12th grade”) schools that “indoctrinate” children by teaching, among other things, “radical gender ideology

³⁷⁵ Ethan Singer, “[Thousands of U.S. Government Web Pages Have Been Taken Down Since Friday](#),” *New York Times* (2 February 2025); Raphael Satter, “[Harvard Law Library Acts to Preserve Government Data Amid Sweeping Purges](#),” *Reuters* (6 February 2025); Tiffany Hsu, “[The White House Frames the Past by Erasing Parts of It](#),” *New York Times* (5 April 2025).

³⁷⁶ Tim Balk, “[Arlington Cemetery Website Loses Pages on Black Veterans, Women and Civil War](#),” *New York Times* (14 March 2025); Tiffany Hsu, “[The White House Frames the Past by Erasing Parts of It](#),” *New York Times* (5 April 2025).

³⁷⁷ Ayana Archie, “[City Crews Have Begun Removing the ‘Black Lives Matter’ Street Mural in D.C.](#),” *NPR* (10 March 2025).

³⁷⁸ Maya Yang, “[Black Medal of Honor Recipient Removed from US Department of Defense Website](#),” *Guardian* (16 March 2025); Geoff Bennett & Ian Couzens, “[Pentagon History Purge Highlights Which Stories Are Told and Why Others Are Ignored](#),” *PBS News* (18 March 2025); Tim Balk, “[Jackie Robinson’s Legacy Vanishes, Then Reappears, on Pentagon Site](#),” *New York Times* (19 March 2025).

³⁷⁹ Trey Walk, “[The Trump Administration’s Assaults on Black History](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (10 April 2025); Graham Bowley, Jennifer Schuessler and Robin Pogrebin, “[Head of African American Museum Departs as Trump Targets Smithsonian](#),” *New York Times* (4 April 2025).

and critical race theory” – vague terms often used to censor the teaching of gender history, LGBTQ+ history and the history of slavery [See NCH *Annual Reports 2021–2024*]. Section 4 of the order stressed the need for promoting “patriotic education,” which would extend to “national parks, battlefields, monuments, museums, installations, landmarks, cemeteries, and other places important to the American founding and American history.” The order further announced the reestablishment of the President’s Advisory 1776 Commission, an 18–member commission Trump had announced during the 2021 election campaign. A 2021 report by the commission, which included a number of conservative activists and politicians but no professional historians, had argued that “historical revisionism” had indoctrinated Americans with a false critique of the nation’s founding and identity, including the role of slavery in its history. The commission had been criticized by historians for being “cynical politics,” for not including footnotes or citations, or participation by any professional historians, and for falsifying the history of slavery and progressive movements, among other things.

On 5 February 2025, the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians issued a joint statement denouncing the Executive Order for “grossly mischaracteriz[ing] history education across the United States” and for using a “narrow conception of patriotism and patriotic education [that] does more than deny the actual history of American democracy; it also undermines its own goals of a rigorous education and merit-based society.” The statement further “reject[ed] the premise that it is ‘anti-American’ or ‘subversive’ to learn the full history of the United States with its rich and dramatic contradictions, challenges, and conflicts alongside its achievements, innovations, and opportunities.” It was quickly signed by thirty history organizations, including the Network of Concerned Historians.³⁸⁰

In late January 2025, Richard Cellini, a former attorney and tech entrepreneur who became an expert in institutional accountability and slavery research, was dismissed by Harvard University together with his team. In 2022, Harvard had issued a report titled *Harvard & The Legacy of Slavery*, in which it detailed its historical complicity with slavery and outlined a set of recommendations, including educational partnerships with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs); creating a public memorial; and identifying living descendants of people enslaved by university staff, leaders and faculty. For the latter project it hired Cellini – who had previously led the Georgetown Memory Project which

³⁸⁰ The White House, [Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling](#) (Executive Order; 29 January 2025); Erica Green, “[Federal Agencies Ordered to End Initiatives That Support ‘Gender Ideology’](#),” *New York Times* (29 January 2025); Zach Montague & Erica Green, “[Trump Signs Order to Promote ‘Patriotic Education’ in the Classroom](#),” *New York Times* (29 January 2025); Diana Goldstein, “[With Sweeping Executive Orders, Trump Tests Local Control of Schools](#),” *New York Times* (30 January 2025); “[AHA–OAH Statement on Executive Order ‘Ending Radical Indoctrination in K–12 Schooling’](#),” *American Historical Association* (5 February 2025); Michael Crowley & Jennifer Schuessler, “[Trump’s 1776 Commission Critiques Liberalism in Report Derided by Historians](#),” *New York Times* (20 January 2021); American Historical Association, “[AHA Condemns Report of the Advisory 1776 Commission](#)” (Statement; 20 January 2021).

searched for the descendants of 272 enslaved people who had been sold by Jesuit leaders in the mid-1800s to fund Georgetown University in Washington D.C. – to work alongside the American Ancestors genealogical institute. Cellini believed that his dismissal was related to the success of his investigation, alleging that from March 2023 onward Harvard representatives had warned him against finding “too many descendants.” He had also previously been deprived of additional funding.

In 2023, Harvard had also created a committee to “honor enslaved people through memorialization.” In the spring of 2025, two professors on the committee resigned in protest stating that the university had attempted to “dilute and delay” their efforts to reach out to descendants to include in deliberations over the memorial.³⁸¹

On 7 February 2025, President Donald Trump dismissed the Archivist of the United States and head of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Colleen Shogan (in office since 2023). No official reason was given, but her dismissal was likely in relation to NARA’s involvement in the classified documents case (in which Trump was indicted for unauthorized retention and concealment of documents related to national security and for obstruction of justice; see above). The Deputy Archivist William Bosanko was forcibly retired. Secretary of State Marco Rubio replaced Shogan as Acting Archivist, with Jim Byron, the President of the Richard Nixon Foundation, effectively running NARA as “Senior Archivist.” Byron’s involvement raised further concerns over the influence of the Nixon Foundation, which had a fraught relationship with the NARA on the management of its archives, dating back to a 2010 Watergate exhibition.³⁸²

On 21 February 2025, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled against the attempt of a group of Jewish Holocaust survivors to sue the Hungarian State for its appropriation of their property through the Magyar Államvasutak (MÁV; Hungarian State Railways) before they were deported to Nazi concentration and death camps in 1944. In delivering the opinion, judge Sonia Sotomayor recognized that “the moral imperative has been and continues to be to provide some measure of justice to the victims of the Holocaust, and to do so in their remaining lifetimes.”³⁸³

³⁸¹ Michela Moscufo, “[Harvard Hired a Researcher to Uncover Its Ties to Slavery – He Says the Results Cost Him His Job: ‘We Found Too Many Slaves’](#),” *Guardian* (21 June 2025).

³⁸² Erica Green, “[Trump Fires Nation’s Archivist in Latest Round of Personnel Purge](#),” *New York Times* (7 February 2025); American Historical Association, “[AHA Sends Letter to White House Regarding Dismissal of US Archivist](#)” (Press release) (10 February 2025); Alexander Karn, “[The Danger of MAGA History](#),” *The Progressive Magazine* (30 January 2025); Florian Delabie, “[Trump instaure son ministère de la vérité...](#),” *Le Soir* (13 February 2025); Jason Baron, “[Trump Fired the Archivist of the United States](#),” *Washington Monthly* (5 March 2025); Michael Konciewicz, “[The Alarming Effort To Rewrite the History of Watergate](#),” *Time* (24 March 2025); Adam Nagourney, “[Watergate Becomes Sore Point at Nixon Library](#),” *New York Times* (6 August 2010).

³⁸³ Supreme Court of the United States, “[Republic of Hungary et Al. v. Simon et Al.](#)” (No. 23–867) (21 February 2025); Adam Liptak, “[Supreme Court Rejects Holocaust Survivors’ Suit Against Hungary](#),” *New York Times* (21 February 2025).

On 21 February 2025, Vice President J. D. Vance accused Niall Ferguson, historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, on X of delivering “moralistic garbage” and “lazy, ahistorical nonsense,” demonstrating “historical illiteracy,” relying on “irrelevant history,” while characterizing him as “a globalist.” A supporter of President Donald Trump’s Make America Great Again ideology, Ferguson had criticized some of the administration’s recent steps in the Ukraine-Russia armed conflict which seemed to reward Russia. In contrast to this appeasement, Ferguson had quoted former Republican President George H. W. Bush who on 5 August 1990 had said about Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait: “This will not stand. This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait.”³⁸⁴

On 25 February 2025, following a backlash from media outlets and pro-Israel advocacy groups, New York state’s Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul directed Hunter College of City University of New York (CUNY) to remove a job posting for a Palestinian studies teaching position, saying she wanted to ensure that “antisemitic theories” would not be promoted in the classroom. Hunter College complied hours later. The posting had called for a historian “who takes a critical lens to issues pertaining to Palestine including but not limited to settler colonialism, genocide, human rights, apartheid, migration, climate and infrastructure devastation, health, race, gender, and sexuality. We are open to diverse theoretical and methodological approaches.” While the CUNY Chancellor and Board of Trustees agreed with Hochul’s decision to remove the posting, saying that its language was “divisive, polarizing, and inappropriate,” the faculty and staff union expressed “strong objections” to the decision and called it “counterproductive” and “an overreach of authority.” Hunter College said it would still hire a relevant expert in the field of “Palestinian history, culture, and society” and resubmitted the text for review days later.³⁸⁵

On 28 February 2025, the National Security Archive called on the Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, to declassify the 2008 National Intelligence Assessment, the first investigation of the National Intelligence Council into the national security threats of climate change.³⁸⁶

On 10 March 2025, the acting executive secretary of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Washington, Erica Carr, ordered the destruction of classified records and personnel files by

³⁸⁴ Niall Ferguson, [Post on X](#) (20 February 2025); J. D. Vance, [Post on X](#) (20 February 2025); Niall Ferguson, “[Niall Ferguson: J.D. Vance’s Fighting Words—Against Me and Ukraine](#),” *The Free Press* (20 February 2025); Niall Ferguson, “[J.D. Vance’s Fighting Words – Against Me and Ukraine](#),” *Substack* (21 February 2025); Neil Mackay, “[Hard Lessons as Vance Humiliates MAGA Pet Scottish Historian](#),” *The Herald* (21 February 2025).

³⁸⁵ Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project, “[Hunter College](#)” (25 February 2025); Marina Dunbar, “[New York Governor Orders Removal of Palestinian Studies Job Posting at Cuny](#),” *New York Times* (26 February 2025); “[Hochul Orders NY College to Scrap Palestinian Studies Ad Seeking Historian on ‘Genocide’](#),” *Times of Israel* (1 March 2025).

³⁸⁶ Rachel Santarsiero, “[The Climate Intelligence Assessment the Government Doesn’t Want You to See](#),” *National Security Archive* (28 February 2025).

shredding or putting them into burn bags, in violation of the 1950 Federal Records Act and the records retention schedules that protected such records. On 11 March 2025, federal workers unions suing the Trump administration for unlawfully terminating USAID employees and programs asked the court to halt the “imminent and ongoing destruction of evidence” relevant to their litigation. Kel McClanahan of National Security Counselors filed a complaint with the National Archives and Records Administration, asking them to “take immediate measures” to stop the destruction of records.³⁸⁷

On 13 March 2025, the American Historical Association (AHA) and the Organization of American Historians (OAH) released a “Joint Statement on Federal Censorship of American History,” condemning “recent efforts to censor historical content on federal government websites, at many public museums, and across a wide swath of government resources,” and adding that “[t]his distortion of history renders the past unrecognizable to the people who lived it and useless to those who seek to learn from the past.”³⁸⁸

On 14 March 2025, President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order (EO) to disband the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the largest federal funding source for museums and libraries, “to the maximum extent of the law.” Six days later, on 20 March, Trump appointed Keith Sonderling, who was also deputy secretary at the Department of Labor, as the new IMLS president. After his appointment, Sonderling announced his intention to “revitalize IMLS and restore focus on patriotism, ensuring we preserve our country’s core values, promote American exceptionalism and cultivate love of country in future generations.” The EO was decried by many, including the American Historical Association (AHA), the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and the American Library Association (ALA).³⁸⁹

On 20 March 2025, 53 faculty members of the Columbia University history department sent a letter to interim President Katrina Armstrong, Provost Angela Olinto, and the Board of Trustees of their university. They wrote that they “recognize[d] in the recent actions of the Trump administration a desire to assert political control over the University” and that “[s]hould this control be realized, here or elsewhere, it would make any real historical scholarship, teaching, and intellectual community impossible.” The letter followed reports about a forthcoming deal between Columbia University and a series of official demands in exchange for the restoration of US\$ 400 million in federal funding (revoked on 7 March 2025 for failing

³⁸⁷ District Court for District of Columbia, [American Foreign Service Association versus President Donald Trump, et al., Joint Status Report](#) (11 March 2025); “Don’t Shred Me! USAID Documents Destruction Breaks the Law, According to National Security Archive,” *National Security Archive* (press release; 12 March 2025); Kayla Epstein, “USAID Staff Told to Shred and Burn Classified Documents,” *BBC News* (12 March 2025).

³⁸⁸ American Historical Association & Organization of American Historians, “[AHA–OAH Joint Statement on Federal Censorship of American History](#)” (Washington: AHA–OAH, 13 March 2025).

³⁸⁹ American Historical Association, “[Action Alert: Defend the Institute for Museum and Library Services](#)” (action alert) (19 March 2025); Kathryn Palmer, “[Trump Order Threatens University Libraries, Museums](#),” *Inside Higher Ed* (20 March 2025); Hillel Italie, “[What’s Happening with the Institute of Museum and Library Services after Trump’s Executive Order](#),” *Associated Press* (20 March 2025).

to address the “persistent harassment of Jewish students.”³⁹⁰

On 26 March 2025, it was announced that three professors from Yale University specialized in the study of Fascism – philosopher Jason Stanley, historian Timothy Snyder, and historian Marci Shore – accepted a position at the University of Toronto Munk School, partly for political reasons (the Trump administration’s attacks on civil liberties; the regression of American democracy; the lack of free debate). In addition, Shore said that Yale University failed to publicly defend Snyder (her husband) when Vice President J. D. Vance criticized him on *X* in January 2025. After President Donald Trump had nominated Pete Hegseth as defense secretary, Snyder had posted that “a Christian Reconstructionist war on Americans led from the Department of Defense is likely to break the United States,” upon which Vance had reposted with the caption “That this person is a professor at Yale is actually an embarrassment.” *X*’s owner Elon Musk responded in agreement.³⁹¹

On 26 March 2025, Cemal Kafadar, a historian and professor Turkish studies, and Rosie Bsheer, a historian of the Middle East, were reportedly forced out of their position as director and associate director respectively of the Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) by the Interim Dean of Social Science, economist David Cutler. The decision was allegedly an attempt to appease President Donald Trump, who had criticized Harvard University for having an anti-Israel bias. In May 2024, the Harvard Jewish Alumni Alliance, an alumni advocacy group, had accused the CMES of demonizing Israel as a perpetrator of the crimes of apartheid and genocide and accused Kafadar of expressing pro-Palestine views. On 31 March 2025, Harvard’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors issued a press release criticizing the decision as an infringement on academic freedom and called on Harvard to release “any reports or evaluations” detailing alleged anti-Israel biases.³⁹²

On 27 March 2025, President Donald Trump issued Executive Order (EO), “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History,” targeting the Smithsonian Institution, a conglomerate of twenty-one museums and research centers established in 1846, which he described as having been taken over by a “revisionist

³⁹⁰ Faculty Members and Affiliates of the Columbia History Department, “[Letter to Armstrong: We Recognize in the Recent Actions of the Trump Administration a Desire to Assert Political Control](#),” *Columbia Spectator* (25 March 2025); Zane McNeill, “[Columbia University Historians Warn of Trump’s Threat to Academic Freedom](#),” *Thruthout* (20 March 2025).

³⁹¹ Ryan Quinn, “[Outspoken Fascism Scholars Leave Yale for Canada](#),” *Inside HigherEd* (26 March 2025); Timothy Snyder, “[Snyder on Leaving Yale](#),” *Yale News* (4 April 2025); Marci Shore, Timothy Snyder & Jason Stanley, “[We Study Fascism, and We’re Leaving the U.S.](#),” *New York Times* (14 May 2025).

³⁹² William C. Mao & Veronica H. Paulus, “[Harvard Dismisses Leaders of Center for Middle Eastern Studies](#),” *Harvard Crimson* (28 March 2025); Vimal Patel, “[Leaders of Harvard’s Middle Eastern Studies Center Will Leave](#),” *New York Times* (28 March 2025); Lauren Aratani, “[Two Leaders of Harvard’s Middle Eastern Studies Center to Step Down](#),” *Guardian* (29 March 2025); William C. Mao & Veronica H. Paulus, “[Center for Middle Eastern Studies Leaders Dismissed for Alleged Lack of Balance in Events on Palestine, Harvard AAUP Says](#),” *Harvard Crimson* (31 March 2025).

movement” that “seeks to undermine the remarkable achievements of the United States by casting its founding principles and historical milestones in a negative light.” The EO called on Vice President J. D. Vance, a member of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, to “eliminate improper, divisive, or anti-American ideology” from the institution, and on Interior Secretary Doug Burgum to determine whether public monuments, memorials, statues, and markers had been “removed or changed to perpetuate a false reconstruction of American history, inappropriately minimize the value of certain historical events or figures, or include any other improper partisan ideology,” since the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests that included calls for the change or removal of commemorative sites celebrating past slave owners [See NCH *Annual Report 2020*]. The EO further alleged that the planned American Women’s History Museum intended to “recognize men as women,” a reference to the Museum’s exhibition materials about trans women. It also singled out the National Museum of African American History and Culture, saying that the museum “has proclaimed that ‘hard work,’ ‘individualism,’ and ‘the nuclear family’ are aspects of ‘White culture’” – referring to a 2020 online graphic of the museum that had been criticized at the time and withdrawn after six weeks. On 17 April 2025, four Democratic representatives of the Committee on House Administration overseeing the Smithsonian urged Vance to reject what they called Trump’s attempt to impose his own views of American history.³⁹³

On 28 March 2025, Minister of Defense Pete Hegseth extended the impact of Executive Order “Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling” (see above) to include the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. As a result, on 31 March 2025, its Nimitz Library removed 381 books that included histories of racism, ethnicity, slavery, colonialism, gender, sexuality, and the Holocaust. Among them were, for example, *Memorializing the Holocaust* (2010), Janet Jacobs’s examination of how female victims of the Holocaust were remembered, and *The Second Coming of the KKK* (2017), Linda Gordon’s account of how the Ku Klux Klan gained political power in the 1920s. Protesting the removal, the American Historical Association (AHA) said that it “condemn[ed] censorship regardless of the specific historical content or interpretive orientation of the material.”

³⁹³ White House, “[Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History](#)” (Executive Order; 27 March 2025); White House, “[Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Restores Truth and Sanity to American History](#)” (27 March 2025); Max Matza, “[Trump Targets ‘Anti-American Ideology’ at Smithsonian Museums](#),” *BBC News* (27 March 2025); Zachary Small & Jennifer Schuessler, “[Trump Calls on Smithsonian Institution to Promote ‘American Greatness’](#),” *New York Times* (28 March 2025); Jennifer Schuessler, “[What to Know About Trump’s Order Taking Aim at the Smithsonian](#),” *New York Times* (29 March 2025); American Historical Association, “[Historians Defend the Smithsonian](#)” (31 March 2025); Organization of American Historians, “[Statement on Executive Order ‘Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History’](#)” (31 March 2025); Joan W. Scott, “[Trump’s Attack on History Is About More Than the Smithsonian](#),” *Academe Blog* (3 April 2025); Robin Pogrebin, Graham Bowley & Jennifer Schuessler, “[Trump’s Order Puts the Smithsonian’s Chief in the Hot Seat](#),” *New York Times* (3 April 2025); Lynn Brown, “[Which US Will Tourists Find When They Visit?](#)” *BBC News* (10 April 2025); Graham Bowley, Robin Pogrebin & Jennifer Schuessler, “[House Democrats Criticize Trump’s Smithsonian Order](#),” *New York Times* (18 April 2025); Jennifer Schuessler, “[Trump’s American History Revolution](#),” *New York Times* (19 April 2025).

Also in March, the academy cancelled a screening from filmmaker Ken Burns's six-part documentary on the 1776 American Revolution, which had been scheduled for April 22, because Burns had been critical of President Donald Trump in the lead-up to the 2024 election.³⁹⁴

On 24 April 2025, the American Federation of Teachers and other associations of educators won a nationwide order blocking a government attempt to threaten educational institutions with prosecution, or loss of federal funding, if they taught students "divisive concepts" – which included race, and racism and "gender ideology" as defined by the Executive Order "Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schools" (see above) – in history, sociology and other courses.³⁹⁵

In the lead-up to the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War on 30 April 2025 (1954–1975), the administration of President Donald Trump instructed its senior diplomats not to attend any commemorative events and terminated its contribution to veteran-organized reconciliation efforts. The administration's effective dismantling of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) virtually suspended a planned bilateral war exhibition at Vietnam's most visited cultural institution, the War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City.³⁹⁶

On 29 April 2025, the Trump administration dismissed thirteen members from the United States (US) Holocaust Memorial Council overseeing the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Some of them, including Douglas Emhoff (the husband of former Vice President Kamala Harris and Jewish himself) had been appointed by former President Joe Biden (in office between 2021–2025) in January 2025. The explanation – that the new individuals to be appointed would not only honor the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust but also be "steadfast supporters of the State of Israel" – was criticized as a politicization of the museum. In an internal email correspondence on 9 May 2025, some Council members criticized the museum for refraining to openly criticize the dismissals and emphasizing its eagerness to work with the Trump administration, drawing a comparison to similar fears of speaking out that had contributed to the

³⁹⁴ John Ismay, "[These Are the 381 Books Removed From the Naval Academy Library](#)," *New York Times* (5 April 2025); John Ismay, "[Who's In and Who's Out at the Naval Academy's Library?](#)," *New York Times* (11 April 2025); John Ismay, "[From Book Bans to Canceled Lectures, the Naval Academy Is Bending to Trump](#)," *New York Times* (24 April 2025); American Historical Association, "[Military Libraries, Censorship, and Histories](#)" (statement approved by AHA Council) (19 May 2025).

³⁹⁵ District Court for the District of Maryland, [American Federation of Teachers and Others versus Department of Education and Others: Complaint](#) (5 March 2025); District Court for the District of Maryland, [American Federation of Teachers and Others versus Department of Education and Others: Opinion](#) (24 April 2025); Democracy Forward, "[Harmful Attacks on Educational Programs Paused by Court in Case Brought By Educators](#)" (press release) (24 April 2025).

³⁹⁶ Damien Cave, "[U. S. Tells Its Diplomats in Vietnam to Avoid War Anniversary Events](#)," *New York Times* (22 April 2025).

scale of the Holocaust itself.³⁹⁷

On 30 April 2025, hours before the vote on a new state-wide K9–K12 (ninth to twelfth grade) social studies curriculum, Oklahoma Superintendent (the chief executive of education) Ryan Walters, a Republican, pushed through a series of changes that sparked outrage among parents' and educators' organizations, lawmakers, and even some Republicans. The changes included the removal of passages about the Black Lives Matter movement and the murder of George Floyd by a White police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on 25 May 2020. It also included a study question about the 2020 elections that required students to "identify discrepancies in 2020 elections results by looking at graphs and other information, including the sudden halting of ballot-counting in select cities in key battleground states, the security risks of mail-in balloting, sudden batch dumps, an unforeseen record number of voters, and the unprecedented contradiction of 'bellwether county' trends" – reiterating various elements of the so-called "Big Lie," a debunked conspiracy theory promoted by President Donald Trump that President Joe Biden (in office between 2021–2025) manipulated the election results. The revisions came amid previously made changes by Walters, which included the promotion of a Bible translation endorsed by Trump and classes on national pride and American Exceptionalism.

Following Walters's changes, a group of parents and educators filed a lawsuit to reject the changes arguing that they "represent a distorted view of social studies that intentionally favors an outdated and blatantly biased perspective." In the lead-up to an attempt by a group of lawmakers to pass a resolution rejecting the new curriculum, various pro-Trump conservative groups, including Mothers for Liberty, sent a threatening letter to Republicans stating that "In the last few election cycles, grassroots conservative organizations have flipped seats across Oklahoma by holding weak Republicans accountable... if you choose to side with the liberal media and make backroom deals with Democrats to block conservative reform, you will be next." The resolution failed.³⁹⁸

On 1 May 2025, the American Historical Association and other organizations filed a lawsuit in New York City to oppose the illegal dismantling of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH; established in 1981), including the elimination of grant programs, staff, and entire divisions and programs, by the government. On 14 May 2025, they filed a memorandum in support of a motion for a preliminary injunction of the dismantling. One of the organizations affected by the cuts was the nonprofit Internet Archive, founded in 1996 with the aim of providing free access to digitized media, including websites,

³⁹⁷ Katie Glueck & Tyler Pager, "[Trump Fires Biden Appointees, Including Doug Emhoff, From Holocaust Museum](#)," *New York Times* (29 April 2025); Shane Goldmacher & Katie Glueck, "[Holocaust Museum Board Clashes Over Silence on Trump Firings](#)," *New York Times* (9 May 2025).

³⁹⁸ Erin Christy, "[Comparing Supt. Ryan Walters' Rewritten, Controversial Social Studies Standards](#)," *2 News Oklahoma* (25 April 2025); Maya Yang, "[Oklahoma High Schools to Teach 2020 Election Conspiracy Theories as Fact](#)," *Guardian* (17 May 2025).

software, music, and print materials (see above).³⁹⁹

On 2 May 2025, the Trump administration issued its 2026 fiscal budget request, which included a proposal to eliminate the post “400 Years of African American History Commission.” The commission had been set up in 2018 to organize the 400th anniversary of the first arrival of enslaved Africans in Virginia in August 1619, and had since continued organizing and supporting events and education about African American history.⁴⁰⁰

On 14 May 2025, the American Historical Association (AHA) sent a letter to the Texas House of Representatives opposing Texas Senate Bill 10, which would require schools across Texas to display the Ten Commandments in each classroom. The AHA cited the Supreme Court case *Stone v. Graham* (1980), in which the majority opinion emphasized the importance of integrating the history of Christianity into the school curriculum but concluded that the “[p]osting of religious texts on the wall serves no such educational function” [See NCH *Annual Report 2016* for Texas and *2024* for Oklahoma and Louisiana]. On 20 June, the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled unanimously that a Louisiana law requiring the Ten Commandments to be displayed in every classroom of the state’s public schools and universities was “plainly unconstitutional” [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].⁴⁰¹

In the second week of June 2025, the Interior Department announced that it planned to remove or cover up all “inappropriate content” at all 433 national parks, monuments, and historical sites by 17 September 2025, asking park visitors to report any “negative” information about past or living Americans. Leaders at the park service would then review concerns about anything that “inappropriately disparage[d] Americans past or living (including persons living in colonial times).” Critics feared that the policy could affect histories of gender and race, and civil rights struggles deemed improper by the Trump administration. QR codes and signs were already posted at many national parks, including sites commemorating difficult periods in American history like the Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho,

³⁹⁹ District Court for Southern District of New York, [American Historical Association et al. versus National Endowment for the Humanities et al., Complaint](#) (1 May 2025); District Court for Southern District of New York, [American Historical Association et al. versus National Endowment for the Humanities et al., Motion for Injunction](#) (14 May 2025); American Historical Association, “[Historians Defend the National Endowment for the Humanities and American Public Culture](#)” (statement; 4 April 2025); Victor Tangermann, “[Elon Musk Cuts Funding for Internet Archive](#),” *Futurism* (19 April 2025); American Historical Association, “[FAQs Regarding the Lawsuit Opposing the Dismantling of the NEH](#)” ([1] May 2025). “[American Council of Learned Societies, American Historical Association, and Modern Language Association File Motion for a Preliminary Injunction of Dismantling of National Endowment for the Humanities](#)” (Press release) (15 May 2025).

⁴⁰⁰ Clyde McGrady, “[Trump’s Wishes Aside, Censoring Racial History May Prove Difficult](#),” *New York Times* (6 May 2025).

⁴⁰¹ American Historical Association, “[American Historical Association Opposes TX SB 10](#)” (Press release) (14 May 2025); Rick Rojas, “[Louisiana’s Ten Commandments Law Is Unconstitutional, Appeals Court Says](#),” *New York Times* (20 June 2025).

where more than 13,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated after being forcibly removed from their homes without due process during World War II.⁴⁰²

On 13 June 2025, art historian Kim Sajeet ([1965–]) resigned as the director of the National Portrait Gallery (a part of the Smithsonian Institution dedicated to portraits of historical figures), after President Donald Trump threatened to dismiss her, criticizing her as a supporter of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which he called “totally inappropriate for her position,” including for public comments in 2018 about racial and gender inequality in the United States. Sajeet had served for six years as president and chief executive at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania before taking up her post in 2013.⁴⁰³

In the summer of 2025, French-Italian historian and sociologist Emmanuel Guerisoli, decided to move from New York City to Argentina out of fear of becoming a target of agents of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Finishing his postdoc at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at the New School, New York – named after Belgian-Jewish historian and political scientist Aristide Zolberg (1931–2013), who had survived World War II under an assumed Catholic identity in France, and after arriving in the United States (US) as a refugee had become a professor of political science and expert on the history of US migration – Guerisoli had led a class on the war in Gaza, making him a possible target of ICE’s crackdown on campus speech on the pretext of “antisemitism.” He was reportedly offered a tenure-track position at a different institution in the United States but it was quickly rescinded, reportedly due to the Trump administration’s funding cuts.⁴⁰⁴

See also Afghanistan, Brazil, China, Colombia, Denmark, France, Gambia, Guyana, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, New Zealand, Palestine, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Vietnam.

URUGUAY

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001–2013, 2015–2018, 2021, 2024.

⁴⁰² Lisa Friedman, “[National Parks Are Told to Delete Content That ‘Disparages Americans’](#),” *New York Times* (13 June 2025).

⁴⁰³ Robin Pogrebin & Graham Bowley, “[Smithsonian Museum Director Trump Said He Fired Decides to Step Down](#),” *New York Times* (13 June 2025).

⁴⁰⁴ Marina Dunbar, “[‘No Way to Invest in a Career here’: US Academics Flee Overseas to Avoid Trump Crackdown](#),” *Guardian* (15 June 2025); [Zolberg Institute](#); Aristide Zolberg & Agnès Callamard, “[The École Libre at the New School, 1941–1946](#),” *Social Research*, 65 (1998), 921–951.

UZBEKISTAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2005–2014, 2016, 2020.

In June 2024, Parliament passed a law allowing authorities to designate as “undesirable” foreigners or stateless people whose speech or actions were perceived to “contradict the state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security of the Republic of Uzbekistan, provoke interstate, social, national, racial, and religious discord, discrediting the honor, dignity, or history of the people of Uzbekistan.” Penalties ranged between fines and a ban on entering the country for up to five years. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev (in office since 2016) signed the law on 15 November 2024.⁴⁰⁵

In July 2024, ethnic Tajik journalist Salim Inomzoda was arrested and charged with disseminating “information threatening public safety” for reposting on Facebook in 2022 a traditional Tajik song, which the authorities found to be “separatist.” He faced up to eight years in prison.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 519; Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 392.

⁴⁰⁶ Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 392.

VATICAN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2015, 2019–2020, 2022–2024.

On 10 April 2025, the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome hosted a conference titled “Christianity in Azerbaijan: History and Modernity,” organized by the Baku International Multiculturalism Center, the Bakikhanov Institute of History and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Holy See, and the Albanian-Udi Christian Religious Community. Armenian historians and related professionals feared that the event served as a platform for pseudo-scholarly revisionism and denial, advancing state-sponsored narratives aimed at erasing the historical presence of the Armenian Church in Azerbaijan, appropriating its monuments by falsely attributing them to the ancient Caucasian Albanians (a people entirely unrelated to modern Albanians of Europe), delegitimizing the indigenous roots of Armenians and portraying them as foreign to their own ancestral lands. They criticized the fact that the conference enjoyed the permission – and in some cases, participation – of high-ranking Vatican officials and was held in semi-secretive circumstances (the public announcement only came one day before the conference was held and no list of speakers was published), thus minimizing public scrutiny. They linked the Vatican’s support for the conference to the funding by Azerbaijan of restoration projects in the Vatican.⁴⁰⁷

VENEZUELA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001, 2003–2004, 2006, 2009–2010, 2012, 2014, 2017–2021, 2023–2024.

On 1 March 2024, the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) rejected an appeal by Venezuela and confirmed the “decision authorizing the resumption of the investigation” into alleged crimes against humanity committed since at least 2014 [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*].⁴⁰⁸

On 23 September 2024, a federal appeals court in Argentina ordered the arrest under the principle of universal jurisdiction of President Nicolás Maduro (in office since 2013) and Interior Minister Diosdado

⁴⁰⁷ Bedros Der Matossian, “[Statement on the Vatican’s Complicity in Azerbaijan’s Falsification and Erasure of the Armenian Church History and Heritage](#)” (Petition) (April 2025).

⁴⁰⁸ María Paz Rodríguez Galiano, “[ICC Appeals Court Dismisses Venezuela Effort to Halt Investigations into Possible Crimes against Humanity](#),” *Jurist News* (2 March 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World’s Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 396.

Cabello, among others, for alleged crimes against humanity, including torture and enforced disappearances, committed since 2014.⁴⁰⁹

VIETNAM

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1996–2006, 2009–2013, 2016–2017, 2019–2020, 2022–2024.

In the lead-up to the 87th anniversary of the death of Hòa Hảo Buddhist founder Huỳnh Phú Sổ (1920–1947), on 16 April 2024, local authorities in An Giang province blocked roads and placed Hòa Hảo Buddhist disciples under house arrest [See NCH *Annual Reports* 2013, 2016, 2022].⁴¹⁰

In June 2024, the United States-backed Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV; founded in 2016) faced a backlash after students held a commencement parade without the Vietnamese flag. Another point of contention was that FUV's former president Dam Bich Thuy had noted in a 2019 discussion about Ken Burns's and Lynn Novick's documentary "The Vietnam War" that FUV students had been surprised to learn about American suffering during the war, challenging their prior understanding of history.⁴¹¹

In October 2024, *Index on Censorship* listed a series of films about Vietnamese history that were censored because they were not in line with the versions of historical events sanctioned by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) and with Article 9 of the 2023 law on cinematography prohibiting the dissemination of contents that oppose the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and anything which sabotages the great national unity bloc; damages the interests of Vietnam, its people and cultural values; and insults the national flag, the CPV flag, the national emblem, or the national anthem:

- The films *Barbie*, *Abominable*, *Pine Gap*, *Uncharted* : see NCH *Annual Report* 2024.
- The seven-part espionage thriller *The Sympathizer* on television network HBO MAX, because it portrayed the Vietnam War (1954–1975) and its aftermath, adapted from the (also censored) Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of the same name by Vietnamese-American author Viet Thanh Nguyen, who went to the United States as a refugee. The series (with Vietnamese subtitles) and the novel (in a Vietnamese translation) were available in pirated versions on the internet.

⁴⁰⁹ "[A Court in Argentina Orders the Arrest of Venezuela's President and His Right-Hand Man](#)," *Associated Press* (23 September 2024); Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#) (London: AI, 2025), 396.

⁴¹⁰ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 532.

⁴¹¹ Dien Nguyen An Luong, "[Backlash Against Fulbright University Vietnam: Are Propagandists Barking Up the Wrong Tree?](#)" (13 September 2024).

- Films featuring the Oscar-winning actor Quan Ke Huy, because during his Oscar speech he referred to his past in 1978 as an expelled ethnically Chinese “boat person” who ended up in a refugee camp abroad.
- The 2023 South Korean movie *Our Season*, because its main actress, Shin Min-a, once featured in a ten-minute music video titled *Do You Know?*, which was accused of insulting the Vietnamese army and distorting Vietnamese history because it showed South Korean soldiers protecting Vietnamese people from Vietnamese forces.
- The Korean series *Little Women*, adapted from the classic novel of the same name, removed from the streaming service Netflix Vietnam after being officially accused of falsifying the history of the Vietnam War in episodes three and eight.
- *Hoàng Sa Vietnam: La Meurtrissure* (Painful Loss), a 2011 film about the contested Paracel Islands by French-Vietnamese independent filmmaker André Menras, censored for four years (2011–2014) after it was officially approved because after its release it had sparked discontent within the CPV for “not having Party characteristics” and “lacking the Party spirit,” meaning that it did not highlight the contribution of the CPV. After 2014 it was not screened either because the relations with Beijing had been restored. In defiance of the ban, Menras uploaded all his films to YouTube.⁴¹²

A 2024 report concluded that seven out of the seventeen novels published by writer Hoang Minh Tuong, a member of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), had been banned from circulation or republication and that two had to be published overseas due to political sensitivities. In his best-known banned novel, *Thoi cua Thanh Than* (2008; *The Time of the Gods*), published by the state-owned Writers’ Association Publishing House, four brothers navigated different sides of armed conflicts and endured many historical tribulations, from the Maoist land reform in the 1950s to the fall of Saigon in 1975. A reason for the ban was never given. Tens of thousands of online and offline pirated copies of the book were printed and available on the black market. The novel was translated into Korean, French, Japanese, and Mandarin Chinese. Hoang’s 2014 novel *Nguyen khi* (*Vitality*) was originally rejected for publication, and again reasons were not disclosed. The story, revolving around Nguyen Trai (1380–1442) – a Confucian scholar, poet, and politician who was falsely accused of killing Emperor Le Thai Tong (1423–1442) – symbolized the still strained relationship between CPV rule and patriotic intellectuals. In response, Hoang revised the narrative and retitled as *The Tragedy of a Great Character*, the work passed through pre-print censorship. Subsequently, in 2019, the book was published and sold out. However, its previous ban was soon recognized and a permit for republication was not issued.⁴¹³

See also United States.

⁴¹² Thien Viet, “[History on the Cutting Room Floor](#),” *Index on Censorship*, 53 no. 3 (September 2024), 26–28.

⁴¹³ Thien Viet, “[A Story of Forgotten Fiction](#),” *Index on Censorship*, 53 no. 4 (December 2024), 44–45.

WESTERN SAHARA

See Morocco / Western Sahara.

YEMEN

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2001, 2003, 2010, 2013–2016, 2018–2024.

From 21 to 30 September 2024, Houthi authorities arrested dozens, if not hundreds, of people in Sanaa, Amran, Dhamar, Ibb, Hodeidah, Al-Mahwit, Taizz, Al-Bayda, Al-Dhalea, and Hajjah governorates for peacefully celebrating, or posting on social media about, the anniversary of the “26 September Revolution,” marking the overthrow of Imam Muhammad al-Badr and the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic in 1962. The Houthis, who controlled the capital Sanaa and much of northern Yemen, believed that 21 September, the day in which they took over Sanaa, should be celebrated in its place [See NCH *Annual Report 2024*]. They did not bring charges against many of the protesters, amounting to arbitrary detention. One official declared that those arrested “were disturbing public security and directives.” Many were arrested solely for wearing or waving the national flag. In prior years, the Houthis had also detained hundreds of protesters commemorating the 26 September Revolution. In 2023, they had arrested an estimated 1,000 people in relation to the anniversary of the revolution.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴ Human Rights Watch: “[Yemen: New Wave of Houthi Arbitrary Arrests – Hundreds Held for Marking National Holiday](#)” (15 October 2024).

ZAMBIA

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 2009, 2015, 2021, 2024.

In April 2024, President Hakainde Hichilema (in office since 2021) announced the creation of an inter-ministerial committee to address lead contamination in Kabwe, but as of December it had not yet started functioning. In June 2024, the Mining and Environmental Remediation and Improvement Project concluded its work related to the contamination. Although the project had reached some results, it failed to provide durable solutions for the source of contamination. Hichilema had already established a technical committee to investigate lead poisoning in March 2022.

Between 1925 and 1974, the Kabwe lead mine had been owned by several British colonial companies, including Anglo American plc, and it continued to operate after nationalization until 1994. Already in 1936 doctor reports had revealed lead poisonings linked to the mine. After its closure, its waste was never cleaned up and lead dust continued to blow to nearby residential areas. Medical researchers estimated that over 95 percent of children living in the vicinity of the former mine had elevated blood-lead levels, and about half the children urgently needed medical intervention.

In 2021, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights had urged the government to make robust steps to ensure health, safety, and well-being of local populations. A year later, a UN report on violations of the right to a healthy environment had highlighted the case of Kabwe as a “sacrifice zone.” In October 2020, lawyers on behalf of 140,000 Zambian women and children had filed a class-lawsuit in South Africa against Anglo American plc, accusing it of negligence over its alleged failure to prevent lead poisoning. It was rejected in December 2023, on the grounds that it “would set a grave precedent ... that a business could be held liable half a century after its activities have ceased, to generations not yet born, as a result of being tested against future knowledge and standards unknown at the time.”⁴¹⁵

ZIMBABWE

Previous *Annual Report* entries: 1998–2001, 2004, 2006, 2008–2015, 2018, 2021, 2024.

On 16 June 2024, police arrested over seventy people at a private event to commemorate the Day of the African Child (celebrated since 1976) at the home of Citizens Coalition for Change party leader

⁴¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 541–542; “[Zambia: Hope for Kabwe Lead Poisoning Victims](#),” *Human Rights Watch* (22 June 2022); Sarah Johnson, “[Judge Throws Out Kabwe Lead-Poisoning Case against Anglo American Mining](#),” *Guardian* (18 December 2023).

Jameson Timba. The police charged the detainees, including Timba, with “participating in a gathering with the intent to promote violence, breaches of peace or bigotry,” as well as disorderly conduct. The detainees’ lawyers said the police had beaten their clients during arrest, and further ill-treated, tortured, and denied them medical care and other rights in detention. The detainees included a woman with a one-year-old child. Tambudzai Makororo, whose leg was fractured during the arrest, was not allowed surgery until 23 days later. Makororo’s son died while she was in custody, but the authorities denied her request to attend the funeral.⁴¹⁶

On 30 June 2024, authorities disrupted a memorial event for Mboneni Ncube in Gweru and arrested several participants. Ncube was an activist for the opposition Citizens Coalition of Change stabbed to death in Kwekwe in February 2022, allegedly by supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF [Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front] of President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa (in office since 2017) and former President Robert Mugabe (in office between 1987–2017).⁴¹⁷

On 26 June 2025, the hearings about the Gukurahundi massacres (1982–1987) began in Matabeleland [See NCH *Annual Reports 2012, 2024*]. For a decade the massacre had been denied and minimized, until in 1997 the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ) and the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF) published *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*. The hearings, which had first been announced by President Emmerson Mnangagwa in 2019, were criticized for lack of transparency as they were entirely held behind closed doors and because the minutes remained secret for privacy reasons. Some feared that this would lead to the omission of unwelcome testimonies in the final report. Mnangagwa himself had been minister of state for national security at the time of the massacre.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 543.

⁴¹⁷ “[Scores of Opposition Supporters Arrested at Slain CCC Activist’s Memorial Service – Party Says Govt ‘Panicking’](#),” *New Zimbabwe* (1 July 2024); Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2025: Events of 2024](#) (Washington: HRW, 2025), 544.

⁴¹⁸ Marnix de Bruyne, “[Na jaren van uitstel kunnen slachtoffers van bloedbad Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe hun verhaal doen – achter gesloten deuren](#),” *NRC Handelsblad* (25 June 2025); Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe & Legal Resources Foundation, [Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988](#) (Harare: CCJPZ, 1997).