

Campaign results (1995–2025)

—last updated 14 April 2025—

Campaign details available at <http://www.concernedhistorians.org/ca>.

Year	Country	Name (gender) (date of birth) profession (number of appeals) [sources] * reason for persecution [persecuted previously: yes=y] + accusations / charges ~ history of persecution; probable current status
2025	Vatican	(1) [Statement to condemn support of Vatican for historical-denialist theses of Azerbaijan]. */+/~ Denying the historical presence of the Armenian Church in Azerbaijan and attempting to appropriate its monuments.
2025	China	Gao Zhen (m) ([1956]–) artist (1) [Amnesty International] * Satirical criticism of Mao Zedong and atrocities during Cultural Revolution [n]. + “Slandering China’s heroes and martyrs.” ~ Arrested and detained.
2025	Pakistan	Anonymous (m) historian (1) [International Scholars Rescue Fund] * Research on the history of Sikhs and of Partition [n] + — possibly related to his historical research and/or to his being Shia. ~ Enforced disappearance, torture, death threats, exile.
2024	Azerbaijan	Igbal Abilov (m) (1989–) historian, ethnographer of Talysh people (1) [AI] * Research on history, culture of Talysh; collaboration with Armenian scholars [n] + High treason, foreign-agent-instructed public appeals against state, incitement of ethnic hatred. ~ Pretrial detention.
2024	Tunisia	Sihem Bensedrine (f) ([1950]) journalist, truth commission president (1) [AI] * Work as truth commission president [y] + Fraud, forgery, and “abuse of official capacity.” ~ Harassed; detained; barred from leaving Tunisia.
2024	Sierra Leone	Chernoh Alpha Bah (m) historian, journalist (1) [group of academics] * Articles exposing financial crimes and corruption in Sierra Leone [y] + Stir disaffection in the military, causing unrest, inciting publications, exposing classified data. ~ Exile in USA.
2024	China	Rahile Dawut (f) ([1966]–) historical anthropologist (2) [Concerned Scholars of Xinjiang; SAR] * Defender of Uyghur culture and history [y] + Splittism. ~ Disappeared; sentenced to life imprisonment.
2023	Russia	Oleg Orlov (m) (1953–) historian and co-chair Memorial (1) [petition Memorial] * Anti-war stance [y] + Repeated discrediting of the Russian army. ~ Awaiting trial, risks up to three years in prison.
2023	Colombia	Sergio Antonio Mosquera (m) (?) historian (1) [petition of US scholars] * Founder of African diasporic center and museum Muntú Bantú in Quibdó. + — ~ Death threats from armed groups.
2021	Russia	NGO Memorial (1) [Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders] * “Foreign Agent” act [y] + Violation of “Foreign Agent” act; “justification of terrorism and extremism.” ~ Frequent harassment; closed in December 2022.
2021	Serbia	Association for Social History (1) [EuroClio] * Use of sources of UN tribunals. + Manipulation of history ~ Attacked by Serbian tabloids and social media.

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2021	Israel	Mohammed Bakri (m) (1953–) (filmmaker) (1) [Palestine Film Institute] * View on 2002 massacre in West Bank refugee camp [y] + Defamation ~ First case (2002–2003) rejected; second case (2017–2021); appeal expected.
2020	France	Samuel Paty (m) ([1973]–2020) history and geography teacher (1) [EuroClio] * History and geography teacher killed for teaching about freedom of expression and showing cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. + [Defamation of the Prophet Muhammad] ~ Beheaded with a knife.
2020	United States	Petition for reparations for 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre survivors and descendants
2020	France	Petition to lift access restrictions to the public archives of contemporary history (1940–1970), especially the instruction of 2011 (tightened in 2019) to declassify secret records one by one
2020	China	Rahile Dawut (f) ([1966]–) historical anthropologist (1) [Concerned Scholars of Xinjiang] * Leading figure in Uighur ideology; two-faced. + — ~ Disappeared; in prison or re-education camp.
2018	Guatemala	Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional (AHPN) * Documents human rights violations. ~ Director dismissed in August 2018.
2018	Saudi Arabia	Hatoon Al-Fassi (f) historian, women's rights activist (2) [SAR] * Women's rights activism. + Contact with foreign organizations and media; promotion of women's rights. ~ Detained since June 2018; temporarily released May 2019; charges not dropped.
2017	Thailand	Sulak Sivaraksa (m) (1932) Buddhist social critic, historian (1) [PEN] * Doubted the accuracy of facts of a 1593 battle won by King Naresuan. + Lèse majesté (defamation of the monarchy). ~ Trial underway; possible conviction on 7 December 2017.
2017	Russia	Yuri Dmitriev (m) (1956) historian (3) [Memorial][Index on Censorship] * Work as a Gulag historian (excavation of mass graves from the Great Terror in Sandarmokh, Karelia). + Child pornography (later changed into pedophilia); illegal possession of weapon. ~ Imprisoned since December 2016; trial underway; in poor health.
2017	Iran	Xiyue Wang (m) ([1980]) Chinese-born American history student (4) [SAR a.o.] * Archival research into Qajar dynasty (1785–1925). + Espionage. ~ Imprisoned August 2016; sentenced to 10 years; released December 2019.
2016	Greece	Sheila Lecoer (f) (?) British historian, lecturer in Italian (1) [Alexandria Publications] * Mentioned in book that the late Vayias Vaitsis in 1944 had accepted post under German occupation. + Defamation. ~ Waiting for trial initiated by Vaitsis's family.
2016	Oman	Abdullah Habib (m) ([1964–]) writer, film-maker (2) [PEN] * Facebook post calling to reveal burial sites of rebels executed during Dhofar rebellion (1962–1976). + no. ~ Incommunicado detention; released after three weeks.

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2016	Hungary	Petition against the intended closure of the György Lukács Archives
2016	Yugoslavia (former) / international	Petition to open the archives of the Yugoslavia Tribunal [ICTY]
2015	Azerbaijan	Leyla Yunus (f) (1956) & Arif Yunus (m) (1955) historians, human rights defenders (2) [AI / Radio Free Europe] * documenting political prisoners in Azerbaijan; call for peaceful relations with Armenia; call for a boycott of European Games to be held in Baku. + treason; tax evasion, fraud, illegal entrepreneurship for running human rights groups. ~ 8,5 years (Leyla), 7 years (Arif) of prison; released after about 16 months in December 2015; suspended sentence; still under investigation.
2015	Indonesia	The truth about the 1965–1966 massacres (2) [AI/NCH]
2015	Morocco	Maâti Monjib (m) historian, and others (5) [Freedom Now] * human rights work (civic journalism) [y] + endangering national security; money laundering. ~ judicially harassed, hunger strike, trials pending, in prison.
2014	Paraguay	Nelson Aguilera (f) writer, teacher (1) [PEN] * publication of a historical novel for children. + charged with plagiarism. ~ sentenced to 30 months in prison; on appeal before Supreme Court.
2014	India	Wendy Doniger (f) historian of religion (1) [PEN] * withdrawal of work <i>The Hindus: An Alternative History</i> [y] + under Sections 153A and 295A of the penal code. ~ work withdrawn.
2013	Turkey	Ayşe Berktaş (f) historian (2) [PEN/IFEX] * work for Peace and Democracy Party [BDP]. + tried under Anti-Terror Law for “membership of an illegal organisation.” ~ awaiting trial.
2013	Azerbaijan	Akram Aylisli (m) novelist (2) [PEN] * threatened for novel about Nagorno-Karabakh war in 1988–1994. + distorting facts in Azerbaijani history; insulting feelings of Azerbaijani people. ~ threatened.
2011	Turkey	Büşra Ersanlı (f) political scientist, historian (6) [PEN/HRW/SAR] * work for Constitutional Commission of Peace and Democracy Party [BDP]. + terrorism. ~ awaiting trial; released pending bail.
2011	Azerbaijan	Jabbar Savalan (m) history student (2) [AI] * peaceful political activism. + possessing illegal drugs. ~ sentenced to 2,5 years’ imprisonment; released after 10 months.
2011	Iran	Seyed Hossein Javdani (m) history lecturer (1) [NEAR] * online articles about the Green movement after June 2009 elections. + no. ~ dismissal; <i>previously</i> : threat of dismissal; as student banned from university.
2011	Rwanda	Agnes Uwimana (f) editor, Saidati Mukakibibi (f) journalist (1) [PEN] * interpretation of 1994 genocide (among others). + threatening state security, genocide ideology, divisionism and defamation. ~ sentenced to 17 (Uwimana) and 7 (Mukakibibi) years’ imprisonment; reduced to 4 and 3 years in 2012.

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2011	Iran	Fatemeh Masjedi (f) historian, Maryam Bidgoli (f) women's rights activists (1) [AI] * peaceful collection of signatures for petition demanding end to discrimination against women in Iran. + spreading propaganda against the system. ~ sentenced to one year's imprisonment, reduced to six months; free pending further legal challenges
2010	Russia/Ingushetia	Mukhmed Gazdiev (m) retired history teacher (1) [AI] * enquired into his son's enforced disappearance. + no. ~ intimidated, harassed (home search).
2009	Peru	Salomón Lerner Febres (m), former truth commission president (1) [HRW/NEAR] * efforts to prosecute former military figures involved in armed conflict (1980–2000). + no. ~ death threats.
2008	Russia	<i>Memorial</i> (archive on Stalinist crimes) (1) [HRW] * office raided, part of archive confiscated. + no. ~ still targeted.
2008	Uzbekistan	Anonymous (m) (1970–), historian of ethno-politics and in Central Asia (1) [SAR] * harassed during interrogations by security service because of research topics, association with foreign scholars, visits to foreign universities. + no. ~ seeking to go abroad.
2008	Iran	Anonymous (m) (1957–), historian of Iranian and Turkish history (1) [SAR] * unauthorized Farsi translation of Ali Shariati biography + labeled “ideological non-conformist”. ~ dismissed, threatened with violence; seeking to go abroad.
2007	Haiti	Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine (m) ([1953]–), Wilson Mesilien (m) ([1968]–), founders-coordinators of Fondasyon Trant Septanm (1) [AI] * campaign on behalf of victims of 1991–94 military regime and of 2004–6 violence; campaign to abolish army. + no. ~ Pierre-Antoine: abducted; Mesilien: death threats.
2007	Iran	Mehrnoushe Solouki (f) (1970–), French-Iranian filmmaker and journalism graduate student in Canada (2) [SAR/NEAR] * discovery of 1988 mass grave of regime opponents. + intent to commit propaganda. ~ imprisoned; trial adjourned; permitted to leave in January 2008.
2007	Iraq	Anonymous (m) (1954–) historian of modern (Turkish, Ottoman) period (1) [SAR] * threats, harassment after sectarian militia group takeover of university. + no. ~ life in danger; went to Fairfield University, CT, USA.
2007	China	Lü Gengsong (m), history graduate and writer (3) [PEN] * critical writings (incl. history of corruption); pro-democracy activities. + subversion. ~ expulsion as history teacher (1993); sentenced to 4 years' prison (2008); released (2011); deprived of political rights.
2007	Turkey	Hrant Dink (m) (1954–2007), journalist (3) [PEN/European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)] * comments on 1915 Armenian genocide [y].

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + insulting Turkish identity. ~ several trials; assassinated; ECHR: Turkey violated Dink's rights to life and free expression.
2007	Iraq	<p>Five historians (m) (all deceased) (1) [CARA]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * no. + no. ~ assassinated.
2007	China	<p>Anonymous (m), Uighur historian and anthropologist (1) [SAR]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * engaging with Uighur separatists. + not known. ~ repeatedly detained; abroad; risk of arrest upon return.
2006	China	<p>Dolma Kyab [aka Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso] (m) (1976–), Tibetan history teacher and writer (3) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * manuscript on democracy, sovereignty, communism, colonialism, religion, geography. + endangering state security. ~ exiled, returned, charged, sentenced to 10,5 years' prison, in bad health. Released October 2015.
2006	United States	<p>Waskar Ari (m) (Bolivian Aymara) historian (1) [AAAS, NEAR]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * denied visa to teach Latin American history at University of Nebraska, Lincoln, USA + cancellation of old visa under terrorism-related section of US visa legislation. ~ granted visa in July 2007.
2005	Iran	<p>Yasub al-Din Rastgari (m) ([1927]–) Shi'a scholar (1) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * historical work critical of policies of historic characters, including Wahhabi sect personalities. + insulting Islam and causing schism. ~ charged, sentenced to 4 years' prison.
2005	Peru	<p>Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania (m) archaeologist, Carlos Alberto Suarez Canlla (m) odontologist, Máximo Ángel Banda Roca (m) anthropologist (2) [AAAS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * exhumations at a military base, Ayacucho, and analyzing the human remains recovered from it. + no. ~ death threats.
2005	Turkey	<p>Orhan Pamuk (m) (1952–) writer (3) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * statements abroad on Armenian genocide of 1915 and Kurdish insurrection of 1984–2000 [y]. + insulting Turkish identity. ~ proceedings ended; threats after Dink's assassination.
2005	Armenia	<p>Yektan Turkyilmaz (m) (?1972–) (Turkish) cultural anthropologist (2) [PEN/AAAS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * unaware that he was required to declare any books over 50 years old at customs. + export of "contraband" goods. ~ arrested and imprisoned; tried; released.
2004	Turkey	<p>Hakan Albayrak (m) journalist (1) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * wrote article saying that Atatürk was buried without funeral prayer. + insulting memory of Atatürk. ~ sentenced to 15 months' prison (of which 5 to serve); released.
2004	Bangladesh	<p>Humayun Azad (m) (?1947–2004) author of historical novel (1) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * novel on religious groups who collaborated with Pakistani army in 1971 independence war.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + no. ~ death threats; stabbed; coma; attacks and injuries; new death threats; deceased 2004.
2004	Turkmenistan	<p>Rakhim Esenov (m) (?1928–) (Russian) author of historical novel, a.o. (3) [AI/PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * imported copies of historical novel banned and its “historical errors” criticized by president [y]. + inciting social, national, and religious hatred using the mass media. ~ detained; released after 16 days; left country; 2008: charged dropped, returned.
2003	Kuwait	<p>Yasser al-Habib (m) (?1973–) writer (5) [AI/PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * lectured on Islamic (also Wahhabi) historical issues to private audience. + defaming companions of Prophet; attempting to overthrow regime. ~ abducted; detained; ill-treated; amnestied; in hiding; sentenced in absentia to 10 years’ prison; home raided; fled to UK; 2006: sentenced in absentia to 10 years’ prison for second time.
2003	Guatemala	<p>Fredy Peccerelli (m) forensic anthropologist, a.o. (6) [AI/AAAS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * exhumation of civil war victims to serve as evidence in genocide trials [y]. + no. ~ threats and intimidation; threats continue.
2003	Kazakhstan	<p>Anonymous (f) (1956–) (Armenian-born) art historian, archaeologist (1) [SAR]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * research unrelated to Kazakhstan and Kazakh nationalism not approved. + no. ~ dismissed; unemployed.
2002	Argentina	<p>Fernanda Sanssone (f) archaeology student, a.o. (1) [AI]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * exhumation of graves of disappeared. + no. ~ threats; current status unknown.
2002	Iran	<p>Hashem Aghajari (m) (1957–) historian (6) [AI/PEN/AAAS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * speech called for religious renewal: Muslims should not “blindly follow religious leaders.” + apostasy, blasphemy. ~ 74 lashes; 8 years’ internal exile; 10-year ban on teaching; death penalty repealed, commuted to 4 years’ prison; death penalty imposed again, revoked again; 3 years’ prison; released; ban lifted.
2002	Guatemala	<p>Members of forensic anthropology foundations (2) [AI]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * exhumation of civil-war victims to serve as evidence in genocide trials [y]. + no. ~ threats and intimidation; threats continue.
2002	China	<p>Xu Zerong (m) (1954–) historian (1) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * sent photocopied classified documents from Korean War abroad; active as publisher in Hong Kong. + leaking state secrets; economic crimes. ~ detained; held incommunicado; 13 years’ prison; released (2011).
2001	Guatemala	<p>Matilde Leonor González Izas (f) historian (1) [AI]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * research into mechanisms used by military to control local communities [y]. + no. ~ threats after hiding; current status unknown.
2001	China	<p>Tohti Tunyaz (m) (1959–) historian (5) [PEN]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * research into Uighur history; received copy of 50-years-old list of documents on 1944 East Turkestan Independence Movement. + illegally acquiring state secrets for foreign persons, inciting separatism.

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		~ detained; tried; sentenced; appeal; 11 years' prison; 2 years' suspension political rights; released 2009; forbidden to join family in Japan.
2001	Turkey	Emrullah Karagoz (m) (?1978–), archaeology student (4) [AI] * membership in legal pro-Kurdish political party HADEP [y]. + aiding illegal organization. ~ detained; tortured; released; rearrested; current status unknown.
2000	Ethiopia	Badada Bayene (m) history student, a.o. (2) [AI] * fight between Oromo and other students after Tigrayan student presented paper, in which historical book with derogatory term for “Oromo” quoted. + unknown. ~ arrested; fear of torture; released.
2000	India	Anonymous (m), historian (1) [SAR] * coordinating editor of series on independence struggle (1938–47). + no. ~ dismissed; current status unknown.
2000	Burma/ Myanmar	Ma Khin Khin Leh (f) (?1966–), history teacher, a.o. (2) [AAAS/AI] * (with others) planned pro-democracy march on Martyr's Day. + unknown. ~ detained instead of spouse; life imprisonment; released February 2009.
2000	China	Song Yongyi (m) (1949–), (Chinese-born American) historian, librarian (3) [AAUP] * collected published documents on Cultural Revolution [y]. + purchase and illegal provision of intelligence to foreign people. ~ detained; 6 months' prison; released; expelled.
1999	Palestinian Authority	Abdulsittar Qassem (m) (?1949–), historian, political scientist, a.o. (4) [AAAS] * signed petition accusing government of corruption [y]. + no. ~ arrested; released; rearrested; released.
1999	Guatemala	Juan Gerardi Conedera (m) (1922–98) auxiliary archbishop (1) [AI] * coordinated Catholic truth commission (REMHI) report <i>Guatemala: Nunca más</i> (detailing abuses in 1960–96 civil war) [y]. + no. ~ assassinated; witnesses, lawyers, prosecutors, judges involved in trial threatened; sentences of 4 perpetrators reduced; 1 perpetrator killed in prison.
1999	Ethiopia	Gamachu Malka Fufa (m) (?1957–), Garuma Bekele (m) (?1960–), Tesfaye Deressa (m) (?1959–), writers (all interested in Oromo past) (1) [PEN] * journalism, human-rights activities on behalf of Oromo minority. + armed conspiracy and involvement with Oromo Liberation Front. ~ imprisoned without trial; solitary confinement; all released and exiled.
1998	Mexico	Andrés Aubry (m) (French) historian, anthropologist; Angélica Inda (f) archivist (1) [AAAS] * compiled archives about Maya Indians; assisted in peace talks between government and Zapatistas [y]. + no. ~ intimidated; harassed; archives confiscated; current status unknown.
1998	Palestinian Authority	Wael Ali Farraj (m) (?1975–) history student (1) [AI] * allegedly supported Islamist group. + no. ~ detained; ill-treated; not tried; release ordered in 1999; possibly still in prison.
1998	Burma/ Myanmar	Ko Aung Tun (m) (1967–), U Myo Htun [aka Ko Khun Sai] (m) (?1949–), historians (3) [AI/PEN]

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * wrote 7-volume history of Burmese student movement [y]. + collaborating with terrorist groups. ~ solitary confinement; tortured; 17 (later 13) and 7 years' prison respectively; U Myo Htun released in 2004; Ko Aung Tun released September 2009.
1998	Rwanda	<p>Philomène Mukabarali (f) (?1943–) college director (1) [AI]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * possessed leaflets expressing support for (pre–1959) monarchy. + endangering state security. ~ detained; tried; shortly imprisoned; released.
1996	China	<p>Wang Dan (m) (1969–) history student (1) [AAAS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * leader of 1989 Tiananmen protests; signatory of pro-democracy petitions [y]. + conspiring to subvert government. ~ detained; incommunicado 17 months; 11 years' prison; 2 years' suspension political rights; expelled after 18 months; living in USA.
1996	Albania	<p>Elvira Shapplo (f) historian; Vladimir Qiriaqi (m) archaeologist, a.o. (1) [AI]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * published photograph of former Communist ruler Enver Hoxha in guide book. + distributing anti-constitutional writings. ~ detained; case dismissed; probably released.

Abbreviations:

AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science)

AAUP (American Association of University Professors)

AI (Amnesty International)

CARA (Council for Assisting Refugee Academics)

HRW (Human Rights Watch)

PEN (International PEN Writers in Prison Committee)

SAR (Scholars at Risk).