

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Human Rights on Capitol Hill

published by Amnesty International USA

July 17, 2018

In this edition of Human Rights on Capitol Hill:

- (1) Family Separation: Amnesty International strongly opposes both Family Separation and Family Detention, and urges Congress to safeguard children and families seeking humanitarian protection.**
- (2) Yemen: Eight million civilians face starvation as civil war intensifies at Hodeida.**
- (3) Myanmar: Military leaders must be held accountable for atrocities against the Rohingya.**
- (4) Saudi Arabia: Ends driving ban but continues to imprison human rights defenders who fought for driving rights.**
- (5) Poland: Authorities launch campaign to crack down on peaceful protestors.**
- (6) Sri Lanka: Government is long overdue on fulfilling promises of reform and reparations.**
- (7) Refugees and Humanitarian Aid: Amnesty International urges Congress to robustly fund humanitarian aid and refugee resettlement.**
- (8) Muslim Ban: Amnesty International denounces Supreme Court ruling upholding Trump's Muslim Ban.**



Human Rights Updates

- (1) Family Separation: Amnesty International strongly opposes both Family Separation and Family Detention and urges Congress to safeguard children and families seeking humanitarian protection.** On June 30, Amnesty International participated in [over 700](#) rallies across the US. Amnesty International protested family separation and detention policies outside the White House on July 6. Amnesty International [calls on Congress](#) to press the Administration to permanently halt the forced separation of children from their parents or guardians, reunify separated families, and halt the prolonged detention of parents and children.



- (2) Yemen: Eight million civilians face starvation as civil war intensifies at Hodeida.** On June 22, Amnesty International released the [report](#) *Stranglehold*, detailing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen that has resulted from three years of civil war between Huthi forces and the Saudi-led Coalition advocating for Yemen's overthrown government. Eighty percent of Yemen's population depends on food aid, with eight million on the brink of starvation due to food insecurity. Yemeni civilians are also in desperate need of medical aid and face one of the worst cholera outbreaks in history, with more than one million cases reported. In recent months, the fighting has intensified at the critical port of Hodeida, which is the entry point for over three-quarters of Yemen's humanitarian aid. This attack on the port of Hodeida could result in the death of eight million civilians from famine and exacerbate an already devastating humanitarian crisis of catastrophic proportions. Amnesty International [urges the US government](#) to press the Saudi-led coalition to halt all military attacks against the port of Hodeida. The US government must pressure Coalition forces to streamline vetting processes for food and medical aid entering through Hodeida's ports and into the city for dispersal.
- (3) Myanmar: Military leaders must be held accountable for atrocities against the Rohingya.** On June 26, Amnesty International released the report ["We Will Destroy Everything": Military Responsibility for Crimes against Humanity in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#), which calls for the International Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute key perpetrators of the atrocities against



the Rohingya. The report demonstrates that Myanmar's security forces committed nine crimes against humanity, with responsibility that goes to the top of the chain of command. The report names 13 military officials who have played a prominent role in the murder, rape, and displacement of the Rohingya. Amnesty International [urges](#) Congress to hold Myanmar officials accountable for their perpetration of crimes against humanity.



- (4) Saudi Arabia: Ends driving ban but continues to imprison human rights defenders who fought for driving rights.** On June 24, Saudi Arabia's government under the leadership of Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman repealed the longstanding driving ban that prevented women from driving. Amnesty International criticizes the arrest and detention of 17 human rights defenders who actively organized against the driving ban. To date, only eight have been released, but many more remain in jail or exile. [These activists](#) are being punished for no legitimate reason and must be released. Amnesty International urges Congress to call upon the Trump administration to condemn these arrests and pressure the Saudi Government to release the human rights defenders.
- (5) Poland: Authorities launch campaign to crack down on peaceful protestors.** In recent [months](#), growing numbers of Polish demonstrators have taken to the streets to protest authorities' political pressure on the Supreme Court. In response, Polish authorities have launched [a campaign to silence peaceful protestors](#). Amnesty International's Secretary General wrote [a letter](#) to Poland's president and prime minister condemning their attempts to politicize the judiciary and to stifle the right to protest.



- (6) Sri Lanka: Government is long overdue on fulfilling promises of reform and reparations.** On June 20, Amnesty International submitted a [statement](#) to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee Hearing on Human Rights Concerns in Sri Lanka. Despite committing to a 2015 resolution with the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Sri Lanka has not lived up to its promises of truth, justice, and reparations for its citizens. Amnesty International urges Congress to press the Sri Lankan government to release detainees, establish an office for reparations, and publish a timeline for implementing all promised reforms made in the UNHRC resolution.
- (7) Refugees and Humanitarian Aid: Amnesty International urges Congress to robustly fund humanitarian aid and refugee resettlement.** On May 1, Amnesty International [wrote](#) to Congress outlining appropriations priorities for FY 2019, including funding priorities for humanitarian assistance and the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). Amnesty International USA Executive Director Margaret Huang [wrote](#) to Secretary Pompeo, calling on the US to welcome more refugees. Amnesty International [urges](#) Congress to protect refugees by supporting both humanitarian assistance and refugee resettlement.
- (8) Muslim Ban: Amnesty International denounces Supreme Court ruling upholding Trump's Muslim Ban.** Amnesty International has vigorously fought against all versions of Trump's Muslim Ban, from the original ban implemented in January 2017 to [the latest iteration](#) that was upheld by the Supreme Court in June 2018. The Muslim Ban will have [devastating effects](#) on American families who are separated from their loved ones, foreign students and scholars in the US, and those fleeing oppression. Amnesty International [urges](#) Congress to pass legislation that overrides this blatantly discriminatory ban.

For more information, please contact:

Africa: Adotei Akwei aaakwei@aiusa.org

Asia: Francisco Bencosme
fbencosme@aiusa.org

Eurasia: Daniel Balson dbalson@aiusa.org

Gender: Tarah Demant tdemant@aiusa.org

Nat Security: Daphne Eviatar
deviatar@aiusa.org

Crim justice: Krissy Roth krroth@aiusa.org

Hum rights defenders: Andrew Fandino
afandino@aiusa.org

Refugees: Ryan Mace rmace@aiusa.org

Gun violence: Zeke Johnson
zjohnson@aiusa.org

Americas: Marselha Margerin
marselha@aiusa.org

Mid East: Raed Jarrar rjarrar@aiusa.org

All other issues: Joanne Lin jlin@aiusa.org