

# HUMAN RIGHTS ON CAPITOL HILL

DECEMBER 10, 2019



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## WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO TO COMMEMORATE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY?

In celebration of the anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Amnesty International USA calls on Congress to:

Make speeches and statements calling on governments around the world to protect [peaceful protesters](#)

Post on social media supporting [human rights defenders](#)

[Write letters](#) on behalf of human rights defenders

Fund international affairs budgets for programs that promote human rights abroad

**Upcoming event** - December 10, 9:30 am, Cannon 421: Amnesty's Dunia Tegegn will speak at a Commission on International Religious Freedom panel on freedom of expression and religion in Africa.

## CONNECT WITH US

## THIS MONTH'S FEATURE

**China – Amnesty International Urges Senate to Pass Uyghur Human Rights and Policy Act (S. 178) in December.** On December 3, the House [passed legislation](#) that directs the Director of National Intelligence, FBI, Agency for Global Media and State Department to report on the detention of [up to one million](#) Uyghurs by Chinese authorities. On December 9, AIUSA's Board of Directors sent a [letter](#) to Senators McConnell and Schumer calling for immediate passage of the Senate legislation.



*Above: Amnesty International is campaigning on behalf of Yiliyasijiang Reheman, a Uyghur who has been missing for over two years and is presumed to be detained in the Xinjiang province.*

## 2) MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS – WIDESPREAD PROTESTS BREAK OUT AS PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD DEMAND THAT GOVERNMENTS UPHOLD INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Amnesty International demands that all governments respect peoples' rights to free expression and assembly, and ensure that police do not use excessive force on protesters.

**1) Asia – Amnesty International Lauds Signing of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act (S. 1838) and the PROTECT Hong Kong Act (S. 2710).** On November 27, President Trump signed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act (S. 1838) and the PROTECT Hong Kong Act (S. 2710), which requires reporting on the human rights situation in Hong Kong and ends the transfer of U.S. crowd control equipment to Hong Kong police. Amnesty International demands that other countries end the transfer of crowd control equipment.

### 2) Mid-East

**a) Iran – Security Forces Killed at least 208 in Horrific Killing Spree during Nationwide Demonstrations.** On November 15, demonstrations broke out across Iran as the people of Iran protested a hike in gas prices, with some protestors also chanting slogans calling for an overhaul of the political system. The Iranian authorities used lethal and excessive force against protestors, and implemented a near-total shutdown of the global internet for over a week, which was deliberately done to prevent people from sharing images and videos of the deadly force being used by security forces. Amnesty International calls include for those responsible for this bloody clampdown on demonstrations to be held accountable for their actions, for anyone detained solely for peacefully taking part in demonstrations to be immediately and unconditionally released.

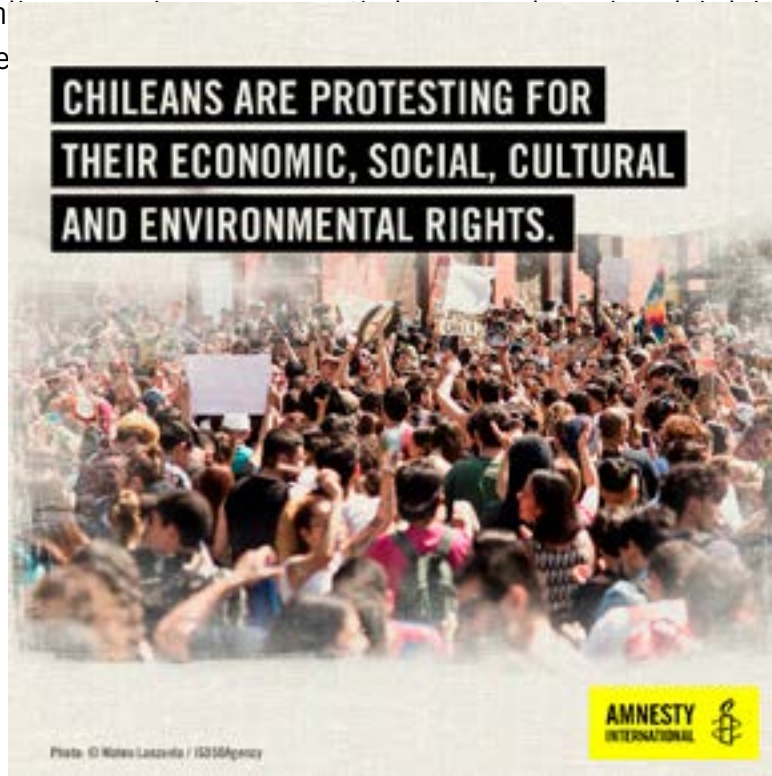
**b) Iraq – Iraqis Take to the Streets to Demand Basic Needs and to End Corruption.** Since October 1, protesters have demonstrated in Baghdad and towns across the mostly Shia south. In response, security forces have killed over 300 protesters. Amnesty International calls on Congress to pressure Iraq to rein in the security forces and launch effective and impartial investigations aimed at ensuring accountability for unlawful killings and other serious violations.

**c) Lebanon - Demonstrations Enter Their Eighth Week as Lebanese Protest Proposed Tax Measures.** On October 17, the Lebanese government announced new tax measures. Tens of thousands of peaceful protesters assembled in cities across Lebanon to protest corruption and to call for social and economic reforms. Security forces have arrested and tortured peaceful protesters. Amnesty International calls on Congress to pressure Lebanon to immediately end the use of excessive force, protect peaceful protesters from intimidation or attacks, and investigate the unlawful use of force, torture and ill-treatment.

### 3) Americas

**a) a) Chile – Anger Over Increased Metro Fares Manifests into Nationwide Protests.** In mid-October mass protests erupted in Santiago after local authorities announced an increase in metro fare. Over the past month, the protests have broadened to reflect anger over social services and

inequality. Security forces have fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at protesters, killing five and injuring hundreds. Amnesty International demands that Chilean security forces cease excessive use of force against peaceful protesters, ensure legitimate demands of protesters are attended to so Chilean protesters can peacefully express their demands, and reform the policing system. Order



**b) Ecuador - State of Emergency Turns Deadly as Police Use Excessive Force to Dispel Protests.**

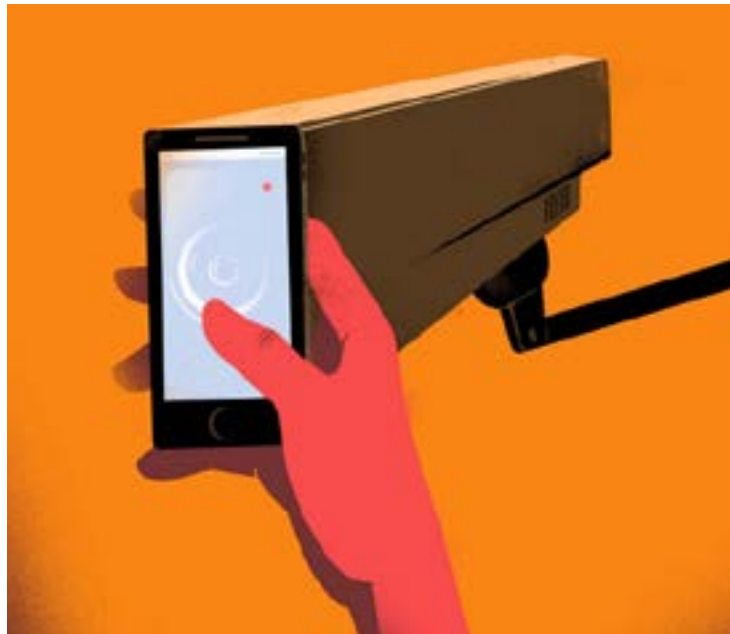
On October 3, [protests began](#) in multiple cities in response to President Lenín Moreno announcing austerity measures. Hours later, the president declared a state of emergency across Ecuador, thus authorizing the mobilization of the Armed Forces and the National Police to maintain order and prevent violence. Amnesty International demands that police cease unlawful repression of protests and ensure protesters can demonstrate peacefully, and the Ecuadorian government investigate the excessive use of force, torture, ill-treatment, and unlawful detention of protesters including children.

**c) Haiti – Haitians Protest Economic Crisis and Government Corruption.** Since mid-September police have used excessive force on protesters and killed [at least 35 people](#). The police injured more than 200, including 8 journalists. Amnesty International demands that police stop using firearms carrying live ammunition during protests and guarantee the safety of journalists covering the political and human rights situation in Haiti.

**4) Africa - Congress Should Demand That the Nigerian Government Hold Security Forces Accountable Under Leahy Law.** In November, members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria protested and demanded the release of their leader Ibrahim Zakzaky from detention. Nigerian

security forces beat journalists and fired tear gas on protesters to prevent them from conducting a sit-in. Police shot a secondary school student while attempting to disperse the crowd. Amnesty International [condemns the arrest](#) and detention of activists, political leaders and journalists who exercise their rights to free assembly and expression.

**5) U.S. - Google and Facebook's Surveillance Policies Pose a Major Threat to Human Rights.** In a November 20 report, Amnesty International [documents](#) how Google and Facebook's surveillance-based business model threatens rights to privacy, free expression and non-discrimination. Platforms owned by Facebook and Google each have over 245 million monthly active users in the U.S. and have become fundamental to how Americans engage and interact with each other. They have effectively created a new public square at the cost of collecting ever more detailed personal information on hundreds of millions of Americans. To protect our core human values in the digital age – dignity, autonomy, privacy – Big Tech must radically overhaul how it operates and move to an internet that seeks to protect human rights.



*Above: In a new report, Amnesty calls on the U.S. government to overhaul tech companies' surveillance-based business model and to protect people from corporate human rights abuses, including through the enforcement of robust data protection laws and effective regulation*

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