

HUMAN RIGHTS ON CAPITOL HILL

FEBRUARY 4, 2020



IN THIS EDITION

1) THIS MONTH'S FEATURE

U.S. - Congress Must Pass the No Ban Act ([H.R. 2214](#), [S. 1123](#)) to Nullify President Trump's Discriminatory Muslim Ban

2) MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS

a) Asia

Rohingya – Bangladesh Government Announces Rohingya Refugee Children Will Get Access to Education

Rohingya - World Court Orders the Myanmar Government to Protect Rohingya

Religion - Asian Governments Must End Widespread Religious Persecution

b) Mid-East

Israel and Palestine - Proposed "Peace Deal" Would Exacerbate Violence and Enshrine Impunity Between Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories

Iraq - Protest Death Toll Surges as Iraqi Security Forces Resume Brutal Repression

Lebanon - New Lebanese Government Must Rein in Security Forces After Latest Protest Violence

c) Americas – Anniversary of President Trump's "Remain in Mexico" Policy Marks Continuation of Rampant Human Rights Abuses at U.S.-Mexico Border

WHAT'S COMING DOWN THE PIKE?

February 6, 3-5 pm, Museum of the Bible: Amnesty's Philippe Nassif will speak at a Commission on International Religious Freedom event on religious minority persecution and human rights violations in the Middle East and North Africa.

February 20, 6 pm PST: Later this month, following the Democratic debate in Nevada and just ahead of the Nevada caucus, Amnesty International USA will convene a [Presidential](#)

[Candidates Forum](#) in Las Vegas focused on asylum, migration, and SW border issues. AIUSA has invited all Republican and Democratic candidates. The forum will be available to watch live on all our social media channels.

CONNECT WITH US

1) THIS MONTH'S FEATURE

U.S. - Congress Must Pass the No Ban Act (H.R. 2214, S. 1123) to Nullify President Trump's Discriminatory Muslim Ban. On January 31 President Trump [announced](#) the expansion the Muslim ban to include Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tanzania. This announcement came days after the three-year anniversary of Trump's original [Muslim ban](#). Amnesty International USA strongly opposes this ban and urges Congress to pass the No Ban Act (H.R. 2214, S. 1123) to nullify all versions of the Muslim ban.

2) MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS

a) Asia

Rohingya – Bangladesh Government Announces Rohingya Refugee Children Will Get Access to Education. On January 28 the Bangladesh government [announced](#) it will offer schooling and skills training to Rohingya refugee children. Rohingya refugee children will get schooling up to the age of 14, and children older than 14 will get skills training. The U.S. should continue its support for humanitarian assistance, including education services, and ensure the Bangladesh government fulfills its commitment.

Rohingya - World Court Orders the Myanmar Government to Protect Rohingya. On January 23 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) [ordered](#) Myanmar to take “provisional measures” to “prevent genocidal acts against the Rohingya community.” An estimated 600,000 Rohingya who remain in Myanmar are routinely and systematically denied their most basic rights and face a risk of further persecution and violence. Amnesty International calls on Myanmar to comply with the ICJ's ruling and take immediate action to cease ongoing human rights violations against the Rohingya.

Religion - Asian Governments Must End Widespread Religious Persecution. On January 28 Asia Advocacy Manager Francisco Bencosme [testified](#) during a joint House Oversight and Reform Subcommittee for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Global Human Rights [hearing](#) on religious persecution. In 2019 governments in Asia enacted repressive religious policies. China detained up to one million Turkic Muslims in “re-education camps”; the Indian government imposed a devastating new citizenship law that discriminates against Muslims; anti-Muslim violence erupted in Sri Lanka after the Easter bombings; and

the Myanmar military continues waging atrocity crimes against religious and ethnic minorities. Amnesty International calls on Congress to pressure these governments to stop the persecution of religious minorities.



Above: On January 28 Amnesty's Francisco Bencosme testified at a hearing calling on religious persecution in Asia.

b) Mid-East

Israel and Palestine - Proposed “Peace Deal” Would Exacerbate Violence and Enshrine Impunity Between Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories. On January 28 President Trump announced his “[peace deal](#)” which was prepared without any input from Palestinian leaders. Trump’s proposal calls for further annexation of Palestinian territory which would violate international humanitarian law. During more than half a century of occupation Israel has imposed a system of institutionalized discrimination against Palestinians under its rule, denying them basic rights and access to effective remedies for violations. The deal amounts to endorsement of these brutal and unlawful policies. Amnesty International is calling on the international community to reject annexation proposals, which violate international law, and reiterate the illegality of Israeli settlements in occupied territory.

Iraq - Protest Death Toll Surges as Iraqi Security Forces Resume Brutal Repression. Chilling [eyewitness testimonies](#) and [verified video analysis](#) confirmed that security forces have resumed their campaign of deadly violence against largely peaceful protesters in Baghdad and cities in southern Iraq. The crackdown on renewed protests between January 20 and 22 saw at least 10 people killed, according to the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, while activists in Basra reported two additional deaths on January 22. Scores have been injured and arrested, with some subjected to torture and other ill-treatment in custody. Amnesty International calls on Iraqi security forces to immediately stop the use of lethal force.

Lebanon - New Lebanese Government Must Rein in Security Forces After Latest Protest Violence

On [January 18 and 19](#) Lebanese security forces used excessive force against peaceful protesters, injuring 409 in Beirut. Those protests have been some of the most violent since the protests [began](#) in Lebanon in October. Amnesty International calls on the new Lebanese government to prioritize reining in security forces and investigate the unlawful and excessive use of force, beatings, rape threats and arbitrary arrests of protesters.



Above: On January 18 a new wave of violence by security forces against peaceful protesters broke out, injuring 409 in Lebanon.

c) Americas – Anniversary of President Trump’s “Remain in Mexico” Policy Marks Continuation of Rampant Human Rights Abuses at U.S.-Mexico Border.

January 29 marked the [one-year anniversary](#) of the Trump administration’s Migrant Protection Protocols, also known as “Remain in Mexico,” under which the U.S. government forcibly returns people to Mexico who are seeking asylum in the U.S. Since January 2019 close to [60,000](#) people who arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border have been forced to stay in Mexico for months in dangerous conditions while they pursue their asylum claims in the U.S. As of January 23, 2020, there have been [816 public reports](#) of kidnapping, extortion, rape, murder, torture and other violent assaults faced by asylum seekers subject to Remain in Mexico. Amnesty International USA has conducted multiple trips to the U.S.-Mexico border, including one as recently as late January 2020, to document stories of pregnant women, LGBTI people, children, and people with disabilities suffering abuses while they wait in Mexico. Amnesty International USA calls on Congress to defund Remain in Mexico and other anti-asylum border policies that [violate the right to seek asylum](#) and humanitarian protection.

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