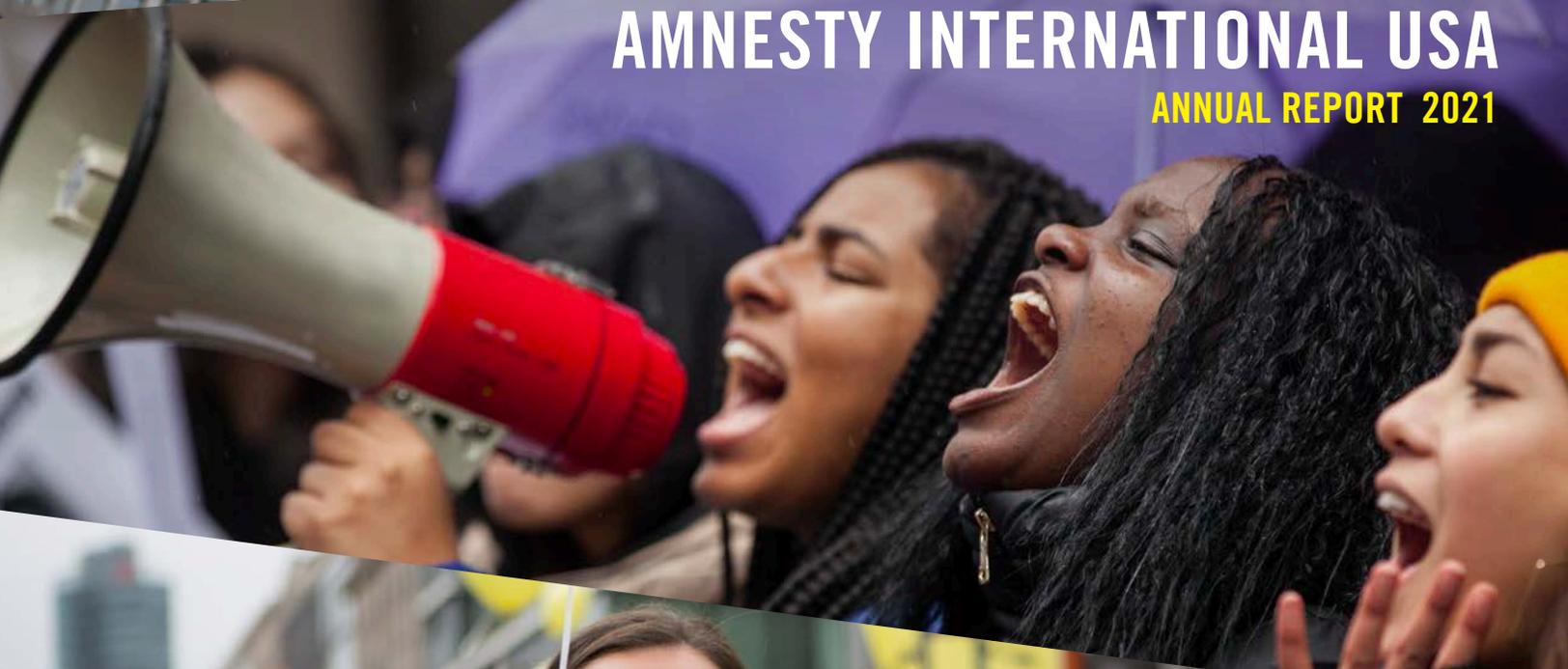


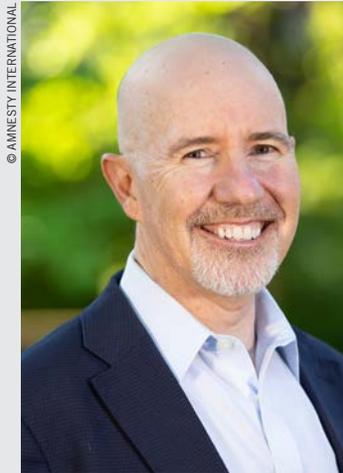


# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



# Letter from the Executive Director and Board Chair



**Paul O'Brien**  
Executive Director



**Alexandra Durbak**  
Board Chair

## Dear Friends,

We write to you at a time when human rights activists, states, and international institutions confront unprecedented challenges on a global scale. Governments, corporations, and other non-state actors increasingly use innovative repression tactics against human rights defenders and social justice movements to consolidate their power. As tools of oppression continue to evolve quickly, Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) is innovating and adapting to keep pace. We have developed a new strategic framework for achieving human rights accountability, inspiring courage in the face of adversity, and lighting a path forward for activists committed to making a difference.

At the heart of the strategic vision agreed upon by members, the AIUSA Board of Directors, and staff are two principles. First, we embraced data driven experimentation to respond to emerging threats and to test new human rights monitoring tools and approaches. Second, we committed to balancing three kinds of human rights work as we experiment: our international and domestic campaigns and programs, our advocacy for individuals at risk and against systemic human rights challenges, and our member-driven and staff-led grassroots activism.

With over 10 million members, supporters, and activists worldwide, Amnesty International has sought to balance these expressions of our power for over 60 years. Now we are finding new ways to support individuals at risk and on death row while also fighting for gender, race, and economic justice, reproductive and bodily autonomy, safety from violence, freedom from police brutality and wrongful detention, and the fundamental right to a healthy environment.

We were humbly reminded of both the urgency and importance of this work last year when a military coup overthrew the government in Myanmar, consolidating its oppressive rule through extrajudicial executions, torture, and intimidation tactics. In Afghanistan, the U.S. armed forces and humanitarian organizations evacuated after nearly two decades, leaving Afghans in a precarious state as the Taliban seized power. Around the world, human rights activists joined forces to protest the continuing oppression of the Palestinian people. In numerous countries, authoritarian leaders locked up or detained journalists and human rights defenders who dared to expose their abuses.

Closer to home, in the United States, the ongoing and systemic police brutality against Black Americans continued. White supremacy and extreme nationalism took center stage on January 6th, haunting Americans and people around the world to this day. Throughout the year, we were reminded of climate crisis effects on human rights as wildfires, floods, droughts, and severe storms ravaged communities on every continent, yet not nearly enough action was taken by those with the most power.

As we faced these growing human rights crises, our movement remained a testament to hope. AIUSA successfully advocated for the release of families from ICE detention, mobilized to protect human rights defenders, mounted crisis campaigns to assist Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers, researched and raised awareness of the gender-based violence Indigenous women face, and collaborated with policymakers on Capitol Hill for our End Gun Violence campaign. Our activists demonstrated bravery and resilience as they marched, petitioned, lobbied, and raised their voices, making real change in the process.

These struggles required significant effort and will continue to demand that each of us bring forth our best qualities moving forward: our passion, dedication, creativity, and our belief that a better world is possible. At Amnesty International, we will always strive to deliver positive impact, both by directly challenging those who abuse their power and by standing with other human rights defenders and allies.

The programs and campaigns that are highlighted in this report are only possible thanks to your support. We are deeply grateful and appreciative for your partnership.

In solidarity,



**Paul O'Brien**  
Executive Director



**Alexandra Durbak**  
Board Chair

# What We Do

Amnesty International is a Nobel Peace Prize winning organization that works to demand human rights for all – no matter who or where they are. As the world’s largest grassroots human rights organization with over 10 million members, supporters, and activists, we work in over 70 countries to protect people when justice, freedom, truth, and dignity are denied.

Amnesty International protects human rights through using an effective three-pronged strategy:

## One

We conduct research to investigate human rights abuses and expose patterns where violations are taking place.

## Two

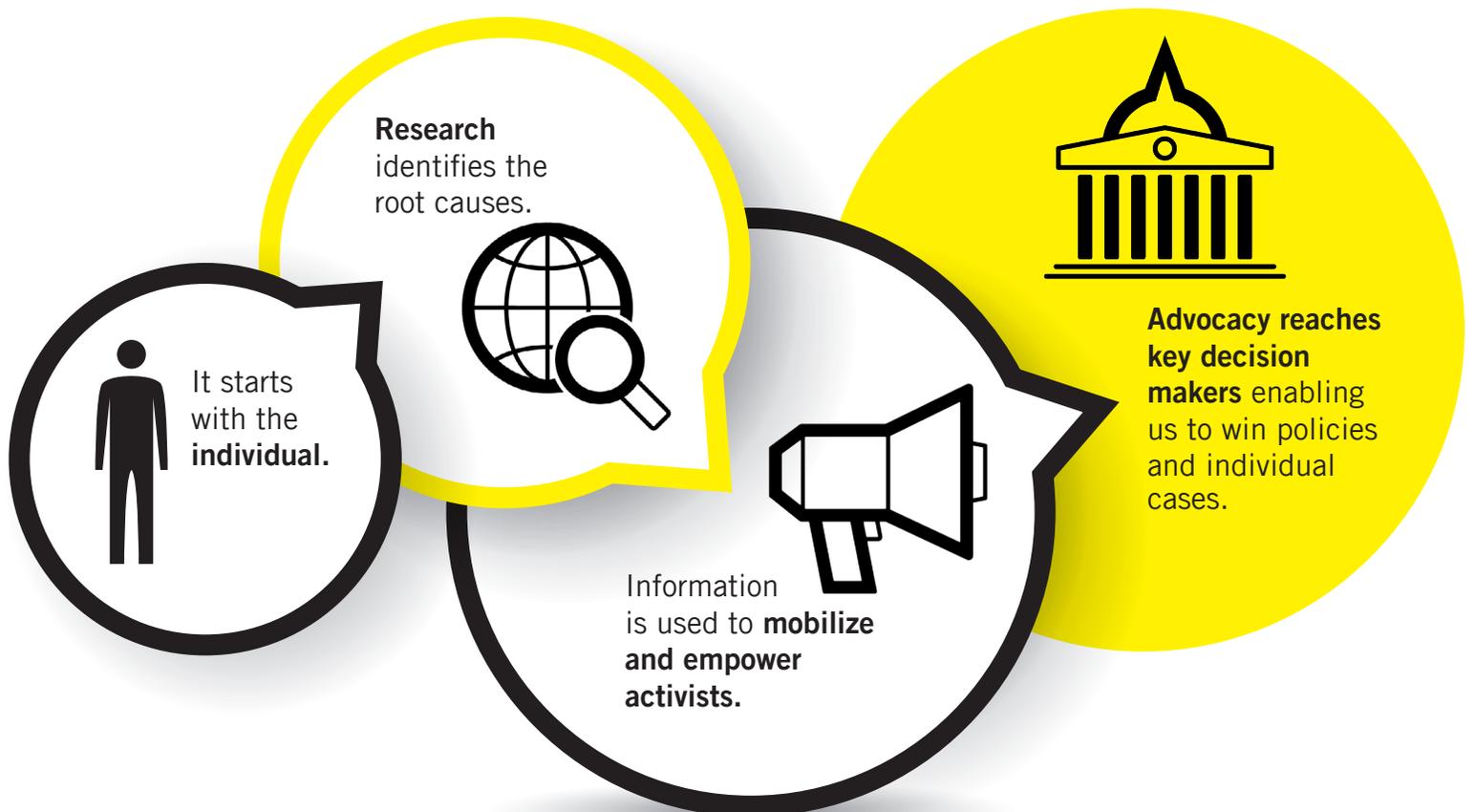
We use this research to raise public awareness and mobilize activists to demand change.

## Three

We develop campaigns to advocate for the social, political, and legal changes necessary to protect human rights.

Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) is the largest country section of the global Amnesty movement. Our organization comprises hundreds of thousands of members, advocates, and activists, including numerous member groups in local communities, high schools, and colleges nationwide. Across the country, we raise awareness, rally supporters, and equip activists of all ages to fight for human rights in the U.S. and around the globe.

We believe that the power to make change begins with each of us, and that together, we can inspire and make a positive difference in the world.





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# Executive Summary

The global human rights landscape in 2021 was deeply impacted by the intersection of multiple crises: the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequality as poverty rates rose, the education gap widened, and vaccines were hoarded by wealthy countries at the expense of lower income countries. Climate crisis disasters such as heatwaves, hurricanes, floods, and severe winters displaced populations as governments failed to take sufficient action in response. Numerous governments used the pandemic as an excuse to repress political dissent, illegally detain migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers, and clamp down on human rights activists who sought to hold such authorities accountable. This impact overall was especially felt among historically marginalized populations such as people of color, Indigenous communities, women and girls, LGBTI+ individuals,

persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, and families and children fleeing armed conflict and humanitarian crises across borders.

It is times such as these that call for hope to be kindled. Amidst such challenges, we witnessed many courageous individuals and communities rise to the occasion, inspiring us all to believe that truth, accountability, equity, and justice are still possible—activists remind us every day that human rights are worth fighting for. The enjoyment of human rights is inherently linked to other forms of social progress, whether that involves creating truly inclusive civic spaces, or transforming political institutions to ensure that they serve everyone. Promoting human rights norms enables us to protect a free press, independent courts, and spaces for nonviolent protest; the need to do so remains as urgent as ever.



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## U.S. credibility globally is inherently linked to the state of human rights at home.

This report provides an overview of AIUSA's campaigns, advocacy strategies, and programs during 2021 which advanced human rights in both U.S. domestic and foreign policies. In doing so, we reflect on the U.S. government's human rights track record over the past year, which involved some welcome progress, but also encompassed significant challenges and setbacks in a number of areas. President Biden promised to make it a top foreign policy priority to signal that the U.S. government seeks to reclaim its leadership in the field of human rights by rejoining multilateral institutions, rearticulating a new policy agenda, and reestablishing its credibility on the world stage. As this report demonstrates, U.S. credibility globally is inherently linked to the state of human rights at home.

Throughout 2021, AIUSA used independent research, monitoring, and advocacy to speak truth to power in the pursuit of accountability for human rights abuses. AIUSA focused on critical issues such as



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protecting reproductive rights, preventing gender-based violence, supporting individuals at risk and human rights defenders, ending gun violence, freeing migrants and asylum-seekers from ICE detention centers, combating police brutality, and launching crisis campaigns for civilians impacted by armed conflict.

During their first year in office, the Biden administration took

a number of steps to signal the U.S. government's renewed engagement with human rights issues: the U.S. government published a policy framework to assist human rights defenders, reengaged multilateral institutions in an effort to combat climate change, removed sanctions that the Trump administration implemented against International Criminal Court (ICC) personnel, and rejoined the UN Human Rights Council after a three year absence. These actions are all important steps in the right direction which we hope will set a precedent for future policies in the years to come. However, it is important to



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critically evaluate the areas where the U.S. is not fulfilling its human rights commitments.

Institutional racism, xenophobia, and discrimination are longstanding and grave human rights issues in the U.S. Our research and campaigns in the past year touched on these systemic problems through working to end mass incarceration, ensure the U.S. government enacts more humane immigration policies, partner with Indigenous activists to end sexual violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women, end gun violence, and demand police accountability and reform. Amnesty activists have dedicated significant effort to calling for an end to detrimental policies such as Title 42, which contributed to the unlawful expulsion of over 1.6 million asylum-seekers and migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border, and mobilized to end indefinite, arbitrary detention within ICE facilities. Human rights activists and journalists continue to experience harassment by border officials who wish to avoid transparency and true accountability. Racial injustice

**We live with the knowledge that none of us is free until all of us are.**



continues to deeply affect local communities in areas such as healthcare, wealth accumulation, environmental safety, criminal justice, housing, education, and employment.

Despite widespread protests over systemic racism in the criminal justice system in 2020, there continues to be a lack of substantial reform of law enforcement agencies across the country. In 2021, 1,055 individuals were killed by police forces, a marked increase from the prior year. The human right to freedom of assembly remains at stake as lawmakers in



## Amnesty International will continue to fight for oppressed individuals worldwide.



36 states introduced legislation that penalizes nonviolent protests, such as tactics used by Indigenous movements to block pipeline construction, or Black Lives Matter activists targeting Confederate monuments.

The Biden administration, however, has taken proactive steps in the area of LGBTI+ rights and gender equity: an executive order was issued that overturned a ban preventing transgender individuals from serving in the military, a Gender Policy Council was established, and the Global Gag Rule, a policy that prevented organizations from receiving U.S. foreign assistance if they provided information or services for abortions, was rescinded. The latter policy unfortunately could be reversed by successive administrations if political circumstances shift. Human rights remain under threat at the state level as multiple legislatures continue

to pass anti-LGBTI+ and abortion restriction laws due to the lack of permanent federal protection. Fighting for LGBTI+ rights, the rights of women and girls, and reproductive freedom remain top priorities for Amnesty International USA in the year to come.

The insurrection on January 6th highlighted how vulnerable governments can be in the face of hateful extremism, rising inequality, and exclusive nationalist movements. The future of human rights will be determined by whether domestic political institutions can be effectively transformed to confront the challenges of our time such as the global climate crisis, institutional discrimination, and state level assaults on civil liberties.

We live with the knowledge that none of us is free until all of us are. Amnesty International will continue to fight alongside oppressed individuals worldwide, whether they are Americans, Uyghur minorities in China, migrants from Haiti, Palestinians living with unequal rights, Afghan human rights defenders, or Ukrainian refugees among many others. On behalf of us all at Amnesty International, we invite you to join us in creating a different future filled with hope, kindness, justice, and human rights for all.

# ► Campaigns

AIUSA's Campaigns team develops creative ideas, effective strategies, and dynamic tactics to address top priority human rights issues. Collaborating with impacted people and coalition partners, we identify key domestic and global challenges for human rights movements and implement collective actions that will make a difference. Over the past year, our campaign for refugee and migrant rights helped free multiple people from ICE detention centers, including ending the practice of family detention at a few facilities, and contributed to acquiring additional congressional sponsors of the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act. After advocating with members of Congress, we successfully secured over \$13 billion in federal funding to support Afghan refugees, ensuring that Afghans arriving on humanitarian parole would have access to refugee resettlement benefits. In addition, our End Gun Violence (EGV) campaign effectively advanced life-saving gun violence prevention legislation in Congress with affected communities and partners, measures that were passed into law in 2022. Amnesty International's campaigns have delivered positive impact on a variety of human rights issues in the face of complex political challenges.





In addition to these advocacy tactics, Amnesty endorsed the introduction of the Freedom for Families Act and the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act, organized policy briefings on Capitol Hill, generated media coverage of this issue, and produced reports that were shared widely with government officials, media outlets, and litigators. Since children and their parents have been freed from family detention, the campaign's new focus concerns significantly cutting funding from ICE and CBP due to their ongoing human rights violations. AIUSA recently joined organizations like the Defund Hate network to call for reduced detention capacity and funding.

In September, disturbing photos emerged in the media of CBP agents in Del Rio, Texas violently charging into Haitian migrants. Despite the public outrage over this incident, the U.S. government continued to expel and deport thousands of Haitians to a country still reeling from political instability, humanitarian crises, and natural disasters. Amnesty launched a rapid response and crisis campaign calling for an end to Title 42, working closely with leaders at the Haitian Bridge Alliance and other advocates on this effort. Our researchers undertook a joint mission with Haitian Bridge to Tapachula, Mexico, where many Haitian asylum-seekers were located. The findings of our investigation were published in the report, *Not Safe Anywhere: Haitians on the Move Need Urgent International Protection*, and a fact sheet, *Stop U.S. Deportations and Abuse Against Haitians on the Move*, which document the human rights violations faced by Haitian refugees and migrants across the Americas.

Throughout the year, AIUSA joined the Cameroon Advocacy Network (CAN) and called for the designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Cameroon, a country experiencing widespread extrajudicial killings, detention, torture, gender-based violence, attacks on political dissent and free speech, violence and discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals, and the burning of villages. TPS is a protection mechanism that would prevent Cameroonians in the U.S. from being unjustly detained and deported to a country where they could face life-threatening or harmful conditions.

In April 2022, Cameroon was finally granted TPS status by the Biden administration, thanks in large part to Cameroonian community members, leaders who led the movement to victory, and AIUSA members who greatly contributed to these coalition

efforts. Activists engaged in over 10,820 online actions to demand TPS, met with members of Congress on the issue, supported the Cameroon TPS Act of 2021, and worked closely with congressional champions on letters to the administration highlighting this campaign. In addition to co-organizing multiple weeks of action, AIUSA helped generate media coverage on the issue in the *New York Times*, *Foreign Policy*, and contributed to a report by the Center for American Progress. These shared efforts ushered in a successful outcome that will make a positive impact in the lives of over 40,000 Cameroonians based in the U.S.

## Spotlight: Case Actions

Maura Martinez, a transgender woman from Nicaragua, was freed from ICE detention after Amnesty co-launched a campaign for her release. A lawful permanent resident in the U.S. for over 25 years, she was unjustly transferred to ICE custody and locked up for over two years while facing the threat of deportation to Nicaragua, a country she has not known for decades and where she could face danger as a transgender woman. Maura was detained at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in California and was separated from the community support and friends she had in the U.S. While imprisoned by ICE, Maura experienced discrimination, abuse, and the denial of basic medical care.

To help free Maura, Amnesty partnered with the National Immigrant Justice Center, TransLatin@ Coalition, and the American Friends Service Committee. Our coalition sent over 14,000 emails to the San Diego Field Office and produced a total of 16,711 actions, built visibility around her case during LGBTI+ Pride activities in the U.S., Canada, Spain, Mexico, Belgium and Germany, highlighted her story in media outlets like *The Guardian*, convinced Representative Vargas to intervene with ICE on her case, and personally handed the DHS Secretary a coalition letter calling for her release.

Upon being freed, Maura said, "I am so, so happy. I still can't believe it. I thought I wasn't going to get out of that place, I thought I wasn't going to get out of that hell. It was very difficult, very traumatic, very horrible. I thought I was alone in this world. I thought it wasn't worth it to keep fighting. And then I realized that there were people around the world, who I didn't even know, very good people who have been very supportive. They supported me by sending me letters, they gave me moral support. I am very happy for all that, very grateful."

# ► Ending Gun Violence

In the U.S., over 40,000 individuals die annually as a result of gun violence, the latter being a leading cause of death for children under 18. Recognizing the urgency of this crisis, AIUSA has been involved in a multi-year End Gun Violence (EGV) campaign which encompasses pathbreaking research, the production of several reports which critically assess the deep impact of gun violence on historically marginalized communities of color, and advocacy at local, state, federal, and global levels to raise awareness of how this issue is a threat to human rights.

The Heroes campaign was developed in 2021 to address the deep-rooted causes of gun violence which disproportionately affect Black and Brown communities. Our heroes are brave leaders who are actively involved in preventing gun violence in their local communities through street outreach, call-ins, mediation, counseling, and hospital interventions.

One of AIUSA's primary goals has been to secure federal funding for community violence prevention organizations, grassroots organizers, and advocates. The Heroes campaign was launched through a virtual panel discussion and included several meetings between our sponsored EGV advocates, survivors, and coalition partners.

Throughout the year, Amnesty's EGV team dedicated considerable effort to advocating for the Break the Cycle of Violence Act (S.2275 / H.R.4118), Ethan's Law (H.R.748), and an Assault Weapons Ban (S.736 / H.R.1808). The former commits to providing \$5 billion in funding for community violence prevention programs nationwide, while the latter two pieces of legislation would implement more comprehensive gun safety regulations. Ethan's Law in particular requires firearms to be safely stored in residences where minors and other individuals who should not have access to such weapons are present. In February, AIUSA endorsed

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two other pieces of legislation, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act (H.R.8), and the Enhanced Background Checks Act (H.R.1446), viewing both items as critical for promoting better safety measures.

Campaigners marked the end of the year by providing poster ads in Washington, D.C. and Dallas, Texas, and sending emails and digital petitions for an annual total of 39,476 actions taken. Another significant achievement is that our advocacy effort reached global levels when activists and staff raised concerns about ongoing gun violence in the U.S. with the United Nations Human Rights Council during the Universal Periodic Review of the United States.

Amnesty activists participate in a series of events every June known as Wear Orange Week, which is cosponsored with other EGV partners such as Everytown for Gun Safety. This occasion brings together communities, activists, survivors, and their loved ones who wear orange to honor Hadiya Pendleton, a 15-year-old Black teenager who was killed in Chicago. The Wear Orange campaign honors Hadiya's legacy by raising awareness about gun violence as a human rights crisis and offers a welcoming space for survivors and their loved ones to uplift their voices for change.

## Spotlight: Break the Cycle of Violence Act

After conducting outreach to Congress, especially with Representative Horsford and Senator Booker, AIUSA's campaigners successfully acquired ten additional cosponsors in the House for the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, which raised the total to 81 by the end of 2021. Joining forces with our coalition partners, Amnesty advocates successfully convinced President Biden to publicly endorse the \$5 billion funding target, a move that influenced representatives who incorporated that amount into their version of the Build Back Better Act that passed the House. This development was celebrated as an advocacy victory for the movement given that the President made this announcement in his American Jobs Plan, a sign that our strategy delivers results in terms of public policy impact.

During AIUSA's annual Lobby Day, 1,266 activists contacted their representatives expressing their support for the act and sent 98 letters to their new congressional cosponsors. At this stage, we continue to support this legislation receiving passage and approval by the Senate, and we will continue to call for Congress to meet that funding target where possible.



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## ► Crisis and Tactical Campaigns

The global landscape for human rights practitioners is constantly shifting as new challenges and opportunities emerge. AIUSA develops crisis and tactical campaigns to rapidly respond to evolving demands as they arise. When we designate an issue as a top priority, our organization concentrates our resources to ensure that a given crisis campaign receives the attention it requires until circumstances change.

### **AFGHANISTAN CRISIS RESPONSE**

As the U.S. withdrew from Afghanistan following years of war against the Taliban, AIUSA launched a crisis campaign which focused on supporting evacuation, refugee resettlement efforts, and accountability for war crimes committed by all parties to the conflict. As the humanitarian crisis worsened throughout the country, we pressed the Biden administration to evacuate more Afghans at risk, including women's rights activists, human rights defenders, journalists, intellectuals, and other individuals who were being violently targeted by the Taliban for their dissident activities.

The campaign eventually shifted from being crisis oriented towards adopting a tactical focus, which involved calls for the U.S. government to admit at least 200,000 refugees in addition to designating Afghanistan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Providing TPS for Afghanistan was recognized as being critical for preventing Afghan asylum-seekers from being expelled while they awaited rulings on their cases. Being eligible for TPS means that Afghans without visa status in the U.S. before March 15, 2022 will be protected from deportation, and will receive work authorization for 18 months. While the Biden administration's conferral of this status is a move in the right direction, we recognize that similar protections must be extended to other countries facing armed conflict.

As a result of our power as a grassroots movement, which involved 53,000 action takers for this campaign, Congress approved funding to assist Afghan evacuees in the U.S. and ensured that they would receive access to refugee resettlement benefits if they arrived on humanitarian parole. The resettlement package includes medical and housing assistance, job skills training, English language instruction courses, and support for children enrolling in educational

institutions. In December, the campaign reached new heights when we managed to secure over \$13 billion in humanitarian assistance funds for Afghans in the U.S.

Campaigners celebrated a victory in March of this year when the U.S. announced that TPS would be granted for Afghanistan. This announcement came as an immense relief for the over 75,000 Afghans who were evacuated to the United States as part of the military withdrawal. However, TPS is a temporary solution, therefore our activists continue to pressure Congress to pass an Adjustment Act which aims to establish a roadmap to citizenship for Afghans who arrived on humanitarian parole. Achieving this objective will require that far more must be done.

## REFUGEE ADMISSIONS RAPID RESPONSE CAMPAIGN

In February, the Biden administration expressed their intent to admit up to 62,500 refugees but reneged on this promise in April when refugee admissions were slashed down to 15,000 individuals. A large public outcry ensued over this broken pledge, and our activists immediately launched a rapid response campaign that mobilized broad grassroots support for policy change. Upon facing that pressure, which included 1,838 actions such as social media tweets, lobby meetings, and published press releases, the Biden administration reversed course and agreed to increase the refugee cap by two fold back to their original commitment.

**Campaigners celebrated a victory in March of this year when the U.S. announced that TPS would be granted for Afghanistan.**



## ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES CAMPAIGN

Palestinians continued to face ongoing human rights violations both within the state of Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in 2021. These abuses included the use of lethal force against peaceful protesters, forced home evictions in neighborhoods such as Sheikh Jarrah, displacement, arbitrary detention, torture, and other ill-treatment, hindered access to environmental resources, land confiscation, obstructed freedom of movement due to checkpoints and settlement outposts, and other forms of systemic discrimination.

As a response to widespread global protests in solidarity with Palestinian human rights activists, we launched a crisis campaign in alignment with the International Secretariat and AI Israel. Amnesty activists, members, and advocates lobbied for an arms sales ban to the government of Israel due to its human rights track record, generating 16,721 digital grassroots actions in the process. Several members of Congress supported this initiative and introduced two historic measures to hold the government of Israel accountable throughout this crisis campaign. During the final quarter of the year, Amnesty International joined other human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch in providing thorough research, investigative monitoring, and analysis that documented a pattern of widespread human rights abuses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

During the last quarter of the year, our activists and members participated in a total of 17,154 actions, including emails, letters, and petitions calling for Congress to pass an Adjustment Act, to ensure that Afghans are not forced back to a dangerous situation where their lives are at risk. Amnesty International equipped members with an activist toolkit, organized virtual lobby days, and continued to pressure elected officials to take action for Afghans seeking safety in the U.S. The U.S. government is still falling short of its obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of all people seeking safety without discrimination.

# ► Security with Human Rights

The Security with Human Rights (SWHR) program seeks to expose how U.S. foreign policies, military forces, and intelligence agencies currently abuse fundamental rights and civil liberties in the name of national security. The program raises awareness of issues such as the wrongful imprisonment of detainees at Guantánamo Bay without a fair trial, the harmful use of lethal weapons abroad, including drone strikes which cause civilian casualties, the institutionalized discrimination against Muslims and other historically disenfranchised communities due to excessive surveillance and harassment, and the implementation of torture techniques during interrogations which violates U.S. and international law. 2021 was no different as AIUSA played a key role in helping to end abusive practices and liberating those subjected to them.



The SWHR program utilized research, advocacy, and grassroots activism to campaign for better policies that could reduce civilian harm in overseas conflicts and called for the closure of the Guantánamo detention center along with the safe transfer of detainees still imprisoned there. A detailed report was published in January, *USA: Right the Wrong—Decision Time at Guantánamo*, which documented recurring human rights abuses at the facility such as torture, forced feeding of hunger strikers, the denial of adequate medical care, and the lack of due process. Daphne Eviatar, Director of the SWHR program at Amnesty, said, “This is about more than just the 40 people still held at Guantánamo—it is also about the crimes under international law committed over the past 19 years and the continuing lack of accountability for them. It is about the future,

too, as we move towards the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and strive for enduring justice.”

Amnesty’s grassroots activist tactics included the development of a digital toolkit which involved a global call-in targeting the White House, a virtual rally with former detainees, submission of a letter with 100 organizations calling on President Biden to close the facility, and preparation for in-person protests to highlight the 20 years of the prison being open—a state of affairs that must change.

## Spotlight: 2021 Victories

AIUSA researchers provided extensive analysis and documentation concerning the civilian casualties, injuries, and other destructive effects of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, and Iraq. After reviewing these materials, the Department of Defense acknowledged that the status quo needs to change and committed to overhaul its civilian protection and response policies. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III issued a public statement in a January 2022 directive that reiterated his commitment to monitoring and reviewing DOD policies to reduce civilian harm. Following Amnesty’s reporting and other contributing factors, there was a marked decrease in U.S. air strikes and civilian deaths between 2020 and 2021.

The DOD’s shift in their approach followed extensive advocacy efforts, including regular meetings between Amnesty teams and federal policymakers throughout the year. During these sessions, our researchers provided thorough investigative reports and policy briefings, and offered detailed recommendations for national security policy reforms moving forward. The SWHR program staff communicated these findings to members of Congress, which contributed to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) extending payments to civilians who have been harmed by U.S. lethal force, mandating that the Secretary of Defense, “establish procedures to receive, evaluate, and respond to allegations of civilian harm resulting from military operations” in instances where U.S. forces are involved.

# ► Criminal Justice

Mass incarceration, police brutality, and the use of the death penalty continue to be issues of concern for advocates of criminal justice reform. The Criminal Justice program actively works to transform the U.S. criminal legal system at state and federal levels in order to promote and secure human rights. In 2021, our projects focused on abolishing the death penalty nationwide and restricting the use of unnecessary or excessive force by law enforcement officials. In addition to these issues, we continue to advocate for the demilitarization of police departments, stronger anti-discrimination laws, and more comprehensive data collection concerning individual casualties as a result of lethal force.

Following the rushed executions of 13 individuals by the federal government from July 2020 to January 2021, President Biden promised as a candidate to work with Congress to pass legislation that would abolish the death penalty. Last year, U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland announced a formal, but conditional, moratorium on federal executions, pending review of the Addendum to the Federal Lethal Injection Protocol, the Manner of Federal Executions regulations, and amendments to the Justice Manual adopted by the previous administration.

U.S. Representatives Ayanna Pressley and Adriano Espaillat and U.S. Senator Richard Durbin reintroduced their legislation to end federal executions, which has garnered little movement thus far. Despite potential abolition being stalled at the federal level, Virginia joined 22 other states to end the death penalty, a noteworthy outcome given that it became the first Southern state in the U.S. to do so in spite of recording a high number of executions.

## Spotlight: Maryland Passes a Lethal Force Law

In 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives reintroduced and passed the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act that included the PEACE Act by Congressman Ro Khanna. After failing to pass law enforcement reform legislation in 2020, the U.S. Senate failed to even introduce a companion bill this year. With federal legislation seeming to be deadlocked, AIUSA worked closely with members of the Maryland legislature, with former Program Director Krissy Roth providing testimony to the House Judiciary Bill hearing, to pass and override a gubernatorial veto of the Maryland Use of Force Statute, effectively limiting police use of force throughout the state. Maryland's new law places it among a few states that require police officers not to use force unless it is "necessary and proportional," and makes it the first in the country to have a law that directs officers to cease using force if it is likely that it will no longer accomplish a legitimate law enforcement objective. There are now just six states in the U.S. without such a use of lethal force statute.



# ► Gender, Sexuality, and Identity

Amnesty International strives to create a world where the human rights of women, LGBTI+ individuals, and Indigenous peoples are protected, and in which all individuals can enjoy their sexual and reproductive rights.

The Gender, Sexuality, and Identity (GSI) program staff investigated and documented the high rates of sexual violence against Native American and Alaska Native women in the U.S. in close collaboration with Indigenous experts and advocates. This year-long effort culminated in the publication of the report, *The Never-Ending Maze: Continued Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the USA*. This report details the failures of the U.S. government to prevent and respond to such violence, and it outlines clear steps to take to address this epidemic.

Throughout the year, we pushed for passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to include specific tribal provisions that address the high rates of violence against Indigenous women. We fought for inclusion of provisions that ensure funding reaches Indigenous survivors and that allow for tribal governments to prosecute non-Indigenous perpetrators of violence against Indigenous women. Ninety-six percent of Indigenous women survivors experienced sexual assault from a non-Indigenous perpetrator, and current U.S. laws prohibit tribes from prosecuting such cases, meaning perpetrators enjoy near total impunity for their crimes.

In terms of U.S. foreign policy, AIUSA campaigned to permanently end the Global Gag Rule, which prevents global health organizations and governments overseas from receiving U.S. funds if they provide information or services for legal abortions, or if they advocate for accessible abortion care. We led a large coalition of human rights, reproductive rights, and global health organizations in this effort, including during a week of action, which produced 70 lobby meetings with Congress, 30,000 letters that were sent to various governmental agencies, over 1,000 calls made to elected officials, and training sessions for 5,000 new activists in human rights advocacy. The Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HER) Act, which repeals the Global Gag Rule, was passed by the House of Representatives in 2021.



## Spotlight: Ending Gender-Based Violence

Combating gender-based violence (GBV) globally is a key priority for Amnesty International, and we made progress toward this goal on several levels. Our GSI staff led a Coalition to End Violence Against Women and Girls of over 180 organizations that seek to shape U.S. foreign policies to end GBV around the world. As a direct result of our advocacy, President Biden's emergency coronavirus plan included our exact language and demands for \$800 million dollars in supplemental funding for key programs that protect GBV survivors. Additionally, the Biden administration issued an executive order to establish the White House Gender Policy Council, a new entity that advises the President on global and domestic gender issues. Amnesty International worked with the new council, which incorporated a number of our policy recommendations, including the appointment of a Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor on Gender-based Violence on the council staff, the development of a National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, the adoption of an updated U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally, and a commitment to prioritize gender equity as part of the U.S. response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



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## ► Technology and Human Rights

Protecting human rights during a digital age is a critical challenge for civil society organizations and international institutions around the world. The goal of the AIUSA Technology and Human Rights program is to proactively ensure that both powerful companies and the new technologies they develop are rights respecting. We accomplish this goal through lobbying for governmental regulation, shaping the way technologies and related firms are funded, and by engaging with both the private sector in this field and, most crucially, their workforce. The Technology and Human Rights program also works closely with Amnesty Tech, a movement-wide collective of researchers, advocates, and technologists which bolsters social movements in an age of digital surveillance, ensures accountability in the design of new technologies, and challenges online threats to human rights activists.

In 2021, we published the groundbreaking report, *Risky Business: How Leading Venture Capital Firms Ignore Human Rights when Investing in Technology*. This was Amnesty's first attempt to critically assess the human rights responsibilities of the venture capital sector, which provides the vast majority of funding for new technology companies. As a group, venture capitalists have the power to influence our future economic institutions, political spaces, and broader social norms—they determine which new technologies and ideas are worth the investment. However, they have previously prioritized profits over human rights considerations. This report highlights how venture capital firms have failed to conduct appropriate ethical screenings to monitor and evaluate the impact of their programs.

### Spotlight: Ban The Scan

The use of facial recognition technology conflicts with the rights to peaceful protest and privacy and contributes to further racial discrimination and profiling by police forces. Responding to this growing challenge, we launched the Ban the Scan campaign, calling for an end to the use of facial recognition technology by the New York Police Department (NYPD). The campaign builds upon Amnesty's 2020 policy which demanded that government agencies, the police, and corporations cease using facial recognition technologies given their levels of inaccuracy, embedded discrimination, and the risk of contributing to mass surveillance. The NYPD is the largest police department in the country; we believe that if we can create positive change there, this project can serve as a model to other police forces, demonstrating that this technology is neither necessary nor beneficial. The campaign is continuing this year as Amnesty works with a coalition of civil society organizations to lobby the New York City Council to pass a ban on police use of facial recognition.

# ► Government Relations and Congressional Affairs



One of AIUSA's key contributions is our ability to successfully collaborate with policymakers in order to promote human rights norms globally. The Government Relations team works closely with federal officials, raises awareness of human rights challenges and opportunities, and conducts policy briefings with public agencies. Our advocacy experts use strategic communications and public outreach to transform policies through publishing op-eds, participating in media interviews, drafting policy recommendations, and lobbying Congress and the administration for support of human rights centered policies.

## ADVOCACY AT WORK

- When the Biden administration initially announced that they would retain the Trump-era cap on refugee admissions, AIUSA's Government Relations staff immediately responded by contacting members of Congress, mobilizing grassroots supporters on social media, and intensifying advocacy efforts. The combination of these public pressure tactics ultimately led the administration to reverse course and commit to admitting more refugees as part of a broader policy shift.
- Following the Taliban's seizure of Kabul in August, AIUSA quickly developed a comprehensive response that involved both our Government Relations and Crisis Campaign teams. We organized a large coalition of over 100 NGOs that pressed Congress and the Biden administration to safely continue evacuations and support Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers. A variety of groups supported this effort, including

Afghan-Americans, veterans, faith leaders, human rights monitors, and humanitarian organizations. In September, we held a congressional briefing that was attended by researchers from Amnesty's International Secretariat who provided updates based upon their human rights monitoring trips to Afghanistan.

- AIUSA's Government Relations team's comprehensive advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill played a key role in securing approximately \$13.8 billion from Congress for supplemental appropriations, supporting 100,000 Afghan evacuees in the process with benefits including public assistance and healthcare.
- To raise awareness of the oppressive conditions Uyghur minorities face by the government of China in the Xinjiang region, which include arbitrary detention, torture, and persecution, our staff organized five briefings with officials at the State Department, the National Security Council, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.
- In April, the Biden administration revoked a Trump era executive order that placed economic and visa sanctions on International Criminal Court (ICC) personnel. AIUSA issued a set of policy recommendations which were in line with the administration's new position—this marks an important step in supporting the court as it promotes international justice and holds human rights violators accountable. The U.S. government also rejoined the UN Human Rights Council as part of its broader engagement with multilateral institutions.
- The Government Relations staff participated in a number of hearings with federal officials: in October, the International Secretariat's Deputy Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), Amna Guellali, testified before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee concerning political developments in Tunisia. Representing AIUSA, former Advocacy Director for MENA, Philippe Nassif, addressed the Lantos Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom— both events commemorated 10 years of civil society activism since the Arab Spring. AIUSA's Asia Advocacy Director, Carolyn Nash, also testified before the Lantos Commission concerning human rights challenges in Sri Lanka.

# ► Individuals at Risk

The Individuals at Risk (IAR) program has been a key pillar of Amnesty International's critical human rights work since the organization's founding over 61 years ago. Since 1966, AIUSA has fought for the rights of human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience around the world, calling for their freedom from intimidation, arbitrary detention, ill-treatment, and other forms of repression. The IAR program is comprised of the Urgent Action Network, which calls upon members and the general public to take immediate action to assist individuals and communities that are at risk of human rights violations; the Case Commitment Initiative, where local student groups adopt an IAR case on a longer term basis; and Write for Rights, Amnesty International's largest global letter writing campaign which produces millions of actions on behalf of individuals facing human rights abuses.

Our work last year made a positive impact in 122 cases, which resulted in the release of 29 prisoners of conscience and progress being made in 32 human rights defenders' cases. These results were possible thanks in part to the mobilization of our grassroots members who took action through the Urgent Action Network, which produced 37,103 actions to support individuals at risk, including 11,536 letters, 21,879 emails, 223 faxes, 215 phone calls, and 3,196 social media tweets. Andrew Fandino, Senior Program Officer for the IAR program, held 89 lobbying meetings with government officials in Congress and at the State Department throughout 2021.

AIUSA's Individuals at Risk program advocacy in this area contributed to the introduction of Senate Resolution 342, a public statement that expresses support for women who are wrongly detained on the basis of their activism and demands their unconditional release. The Senate Resolution highlighted cases from China, Turkey, Egypt, Belarus, Saudi Arabia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Eritrea. Senator Robert Menendez, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, issued private letters on behalf of several of these individuals at risk.

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## Spotlight: Write for Rights Campaign

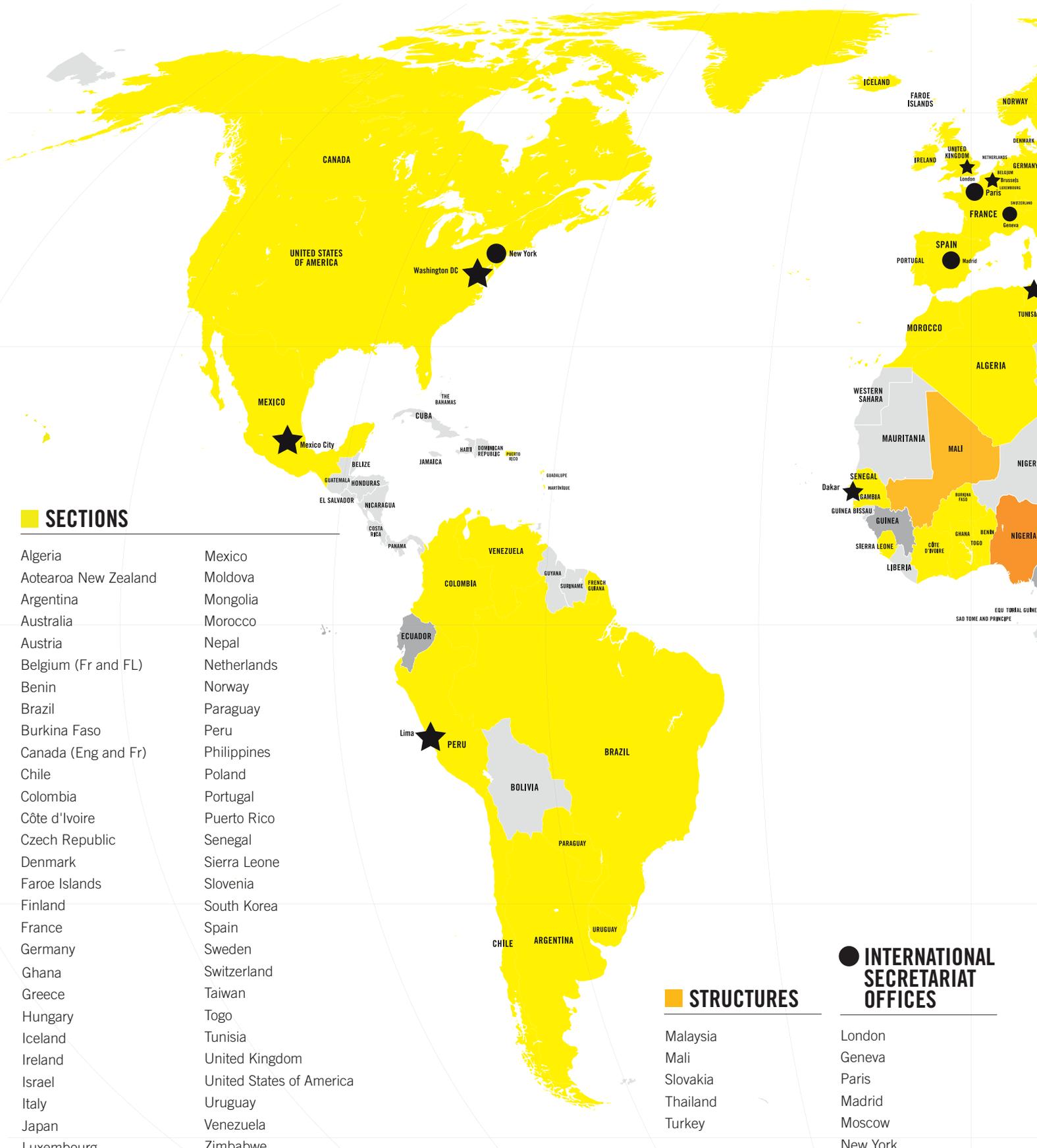
Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign gives millions of people the opportunity to express solidarity with individuals at risk such as journalists, grassroots activists, intellectuals, lawyers, and civil society leaders. The tradition began in Poland when activists decided to hold a 24-hour letter writing marathon to support dissidents who faced oppression by the authorities. Over the years, we have proudly continued this campaign, which led in 2021 to the release of seven individuals: Nassima al-Sada, a women's rights activist from Saudi Arabia, Germain Rukuki, a human rights defender from Burundi, Khaled Drareni, a journalist from Algeria, and Paing Phyo Min, an activist and poet from Myanmar. The IAR program's advocacy campaigns also led to the release of Saudi Arabian women human rights defenders Loujain al-Hathloul, Samar Badawi, and Nouf Abdulaziz.

Another positive outcome of this campaign is that the Turkey METU Pride Defenders, Melike Balkan and Ozgur Gur, were acquitted of the unjust charges they faced. Melike and Ozgur were biology students who promoted LGBTI+ rights through a solidarity group and Pride marches at their university. In May 2019, however, the university banned the march, calling in the police who forcefully dispersed peaceful protests and arrested 23 students. Melike and Ozgur faced up to three years in prison until Amnesty International and other human rights organizations highlighted their case to our grassroots activists and supporters around the world, which led to their release.

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# AMNESTY AROUND THE WORLD



## SECTIONS

- Algeria
- Aotearoa New Zealand
- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium (Fr and FL)
- Benin
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Canada (Eng and Fr)
- Chile
- Colombia
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Faroe Islands
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Japan
- Luxembourg
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Slovenia
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Togo
- Tunisia
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Venezuela
- Zimbabwe

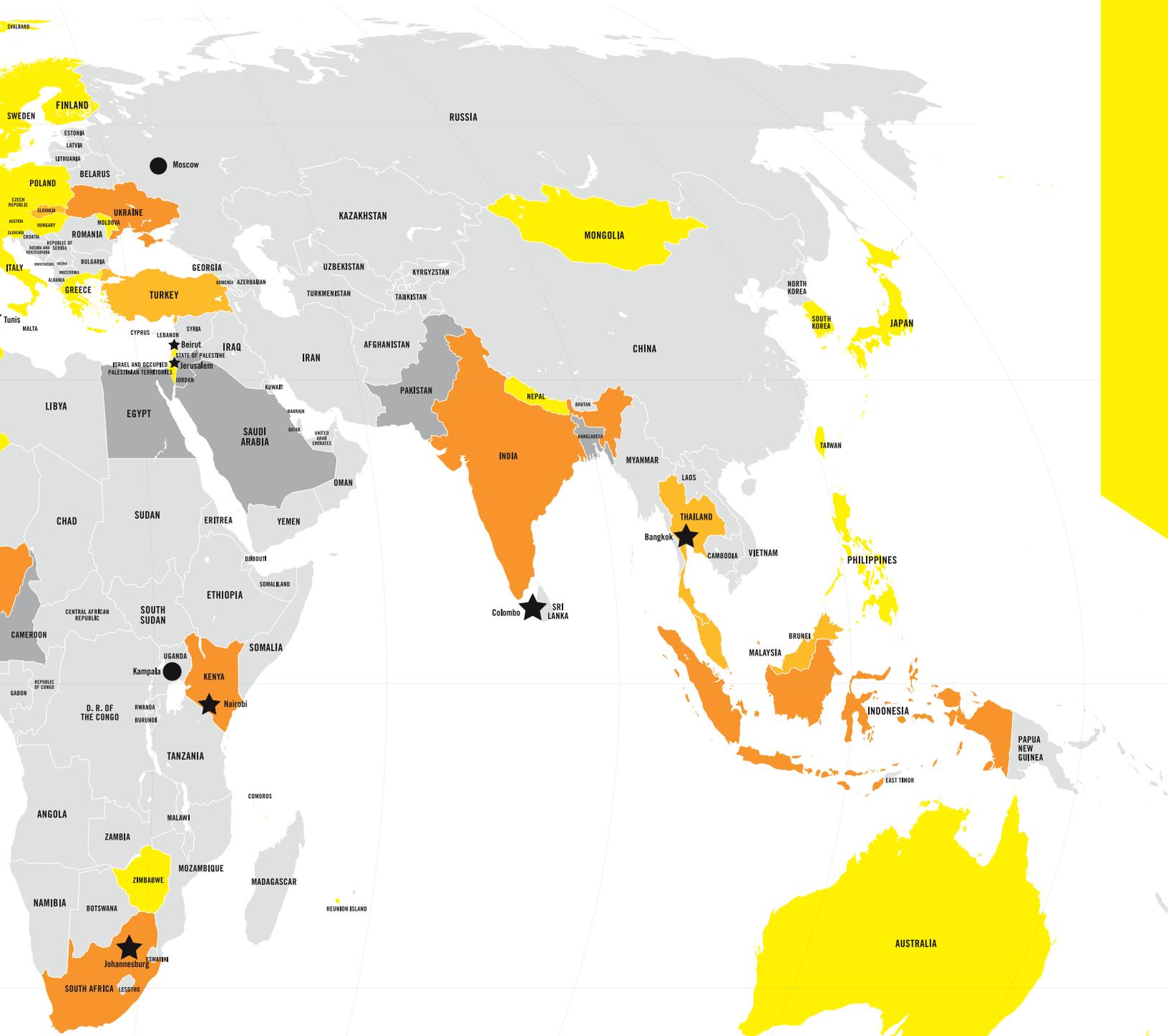
## STRUCTURES

- Malaysia
- Mali
- Slovakia
- Thailand
- Turkey

## INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OFFICES

- London
- Geneva
- Paris
- Madrid
- Moscow
- New York

Amnesty International USA's staff, members and activists are part of a global movement of more than 10 million people across the globe.



**★ INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT REGIONAL OFFICES**

- Bangkok
- Beirut
- Brussels
- Colombo
- Dakar
- Jerusalem
- Johannesburg
- Kampala
- Nairobi
- Washington DC

**■ NATIONAL OFFICES**

- India (operations halted)
- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- South Africa
- Ukraine

**■ TEN COUNTRIES WITH MOST INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS**

- Bangladesh
- Cameroon
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Guinea
- Jordan
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Saudi Arabia

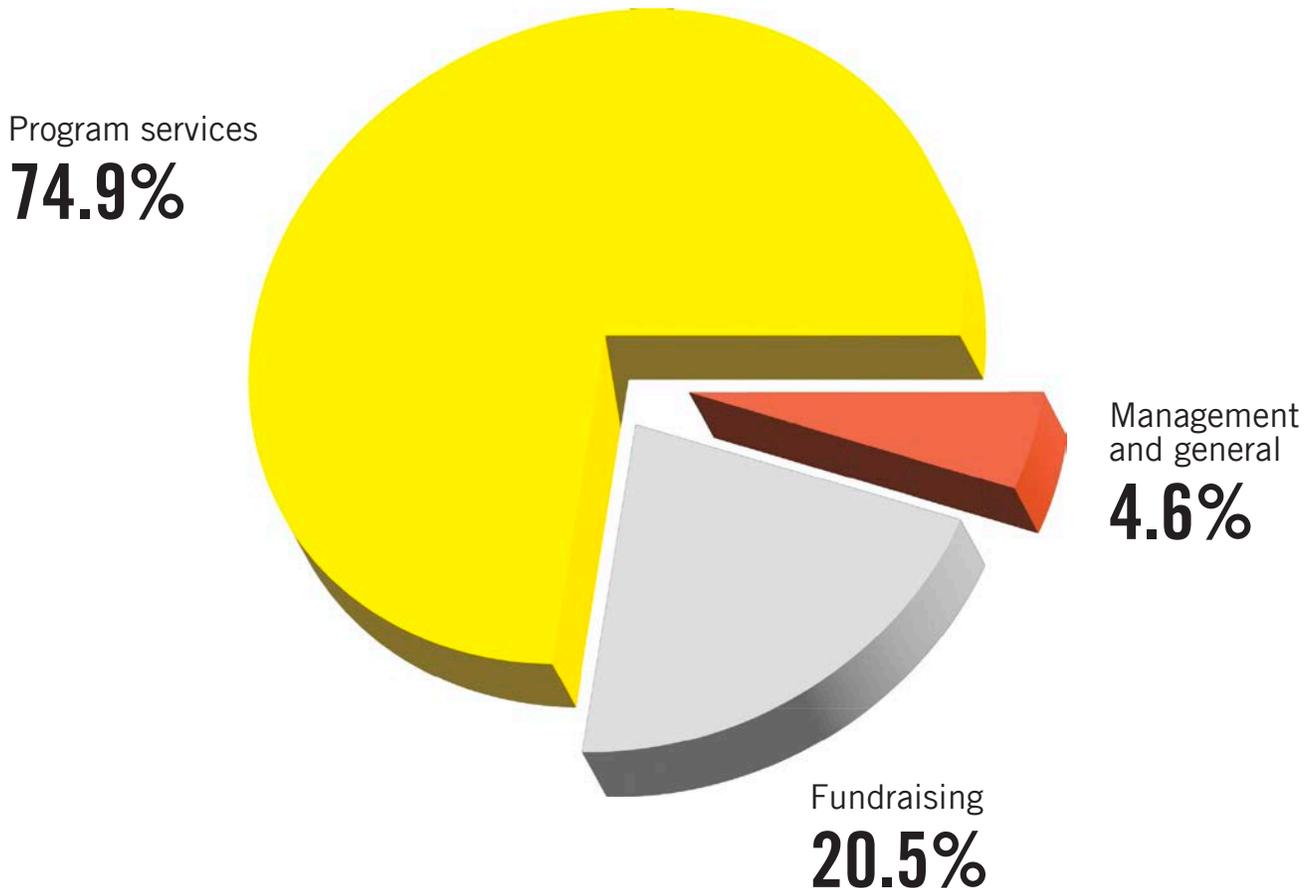
# FINANCIALS

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, 2021 was an incredible success for Amnesty International USA. Our revenue increased by 13.3%, which enabled us to expand our campaigns and programs rapidly in response to various human rights crises. Over 74.9% of AIUSA's spending goes directly toward advancing our programmatic goals such as freeing prisoners of conscience, fighting discrimination, helping refugees and migrants, decreasing gun violence, and pushing for public policies that prioritize human rights for people worldwide. Due to the substantial increase in donor support in the past several years, we can continue to expand both programmatic and fundraising efforts.

Our balance sheet was strongest in December, which is the high point of seasonal cash holdings due to traditional year end gift giving. The Statement of Financial Position showed an overall asset increase of \$5.2 million, with both cash holdings and investment portfolio positions strengthening. AIUSA continues to be the largest funding chapter of the global Amnesty International movement. In 2021, we contributed nearly \$16 million to the International Secretariat to help advance our international work. We are grateful to all our donors, whose generous financial support and dedication to human rights makes our work possible.

## 2021 EXPENSES

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# STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	12/31/21	12/31/20
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$16,599,941	\$12,524,150
Investments, at fair value	24,529,342	21,943,459
Contributions receivable	1,591,934	2,799,904
Prepaid expenses and other assets	957,357	1,039,423
Fixed assets, net	773,296	989,306
Total assets	<b>\$44,451,870</b>	<b>\$39,296,242</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$887,403	\$938,097
Payroll and payroll taxes payable	1,071,243	893,618
International Secretariat assessment payable	3,132,704	4,172,084
Charitable gift annuity obligation	1,551,348	1,714,064
Paycheck Protection Program loan payable	–	2,375,000
Deferred Rent	898,704	192,559
Total liabilities	<b>7,541,402</b>	<b>10,285,422</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	28,046,878	22,737,581
Board-designated transition fund	3,000,000	
Total net assets without donor restrictions	<b>31,046,878</b>	<b>22,737,581</b>
With donor restrictions	5,863,590	6,273,239
Total net assets	<b>36,910,468</b>	<b>29,010,820</b>
Total liabilities and net assets	<b>\$44,451,870</b>	<b>\$39,296,242</b>

## STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDING

	12/31/2021	12/31/2020
<b>OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>		
Contributions, grants and bequests	\$55,916,448	\$51,295,422
International Secretariat grants and pass-through grants	151,451	182,314
Donated services	55,500	112,053
Payroll Protection Program loan Income	2,375,000	
Other revenues	199,934	239,084
Total operating revenue and support	<b>58,698,333</b>	<b>51,828,873</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program services	39,937,477	37,954,873
Management and general	2,461,935	2,924,496
Fundraising	10,905,188	10,633,033
Total expenses	<b>53,304,600</b>	<b>51,512,402</b>
(Decrease) increase in net assets before nonoperating activities	<b>5,393,733</b>	<b>316,471</b>
<b>NONOPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Change in value of gift annuity obligations	(21,127)	117,388
Interest, dividends, realized and unrealized (losses) gains	2,527,042	3,434,800
Total nonoperating activities	<b>2,505,915</b>	<b>3,552,188</b>
<b>Changes in net assets</b>	<b>7,899,648</b>	<b>3,868,659</b>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE FULL SET OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

# Letter from the Chief Development Officer

Dear Friends,

We hope this message finds you well as we confront many complex social, political, and economic challenges around the world. In the face of global crises, we are incredibly proud of our organization's ability to inspire everyday individuals to make a difference combating human rights abuses, including by challenging racial and gender injustice, holding police forces and national security agencies accountable, or by defending the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants. Your kind and generous support made our progress over the past year possible, and we are pleased to report that AIUSA experienced positive growth in terms of internal development, successfully expanding our financial resources in the process.

With your partnership, we were able to effectively assist our colleagues around the world as they undertook research, advocacy, and grassroots activism to advance human rights. Thanks to you, we continued to advocate for human rights defenders and individuals at risk globally, called for the protection of civilians during armed conflicts, mobilized for women's rights and LGBTI+ rights, demanded an end to systemic police brutality and gun violence, and pressured lawmakers to create more humane border policies. Our movement's contributions to social justice campaigns would not be possible without you, and for that, we are deeply grateful.

With much appreciation, we wish to say thank you for joining us as we strive to create a world where human rights can be enjoyed by all.

In solidarity,



**Marcy Bourne**  
Chief Development Officer

# In Their Words: A Profile of Amnesty Supporters Raul and Jacqueline Esquivel

Raul and Jacqueline Esquivel have long held a deep passion for human rights causes and became involved with Amnesty International just over five years ago because, in their words, “Human rights matter. We saw the inequities and injustices being perpetrated in the world and knowing that we had the opportunity to help, joined Amnesty, which, for over 60 years, has shined a light on the human rights challenges so many face.”

Since becoming members, they have increased their support every year, “We have always studied trends, and in the past five years, we’ve noticed a trend toward the infringement upon human rights. People are increasingly being detained, jailed, prosecuted, or forcibly disappeared for pushing back publicly against hostile governments; 25 million plus global refugees who have had to flee their homes are being treated like criminals; billions of people in the Global South still do not have access to life-saving vaccines; there are children across the U.S. who are afraid to go to school because of the threat of gun violence; and the list goes on. For ourselves, and for our daughters, we want to be part of reversing those trends.”

Toward the end of last year, the Esquivels decided to make a multi-year pledge to AIUSA, “As investors, we understand the importance of consistent funding. Amnesty is launching a new five-year strategic plan this year and we want for them to be able to really plan ahead.

By guaranteeing a steady source of revenue, Amnesty can focus less energy on seeking new gifts and more energy on expanding, evaluating, and executing the programs and initiatives which do the work we care the most about.”

By making this kind of commitment, Amnesty International will indeed be able to support the areas of work which matter most to the Esquivels, which include: the *Be There* Crisis Response teams, refugee, migrant, and asylum-seekers’ rights, ending gun violence, deadly force and police accountability, gender, sexuality, and identity issues, and climate justice. We are incredibly grateful to generous donors like Raul and Jackie whose gifts enable us to successfully grow and mature these programs. This work is only possible due to the kind dedication of individuals like them.



**For more information on making a leadership gift, please contact Marnie Fairchild at 631-902-2514 or [mfairchild@aiusa.org](mailto:mfairchild@aiusa.org).**





# A GIFT TO PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

We all want a safe, secure, and bright future for our loved ones. One of the best ways to ensure that is by writing a will. Everyone needs a will – it is an essential legal document that allows you to make a plan, make sure your wishes are clearly known and followed, and protect the people and causes that you care about. But this task has traditionally been complicated, expensive, and inaccessible. Amnesty International is excited to share a free easy-to-use resource that allows you to write a legally valid will in under 20 minutes, at no personal cost. It is a simple way to get peace of mind and check off an important life task. Just as you will be investing in your own future, you will have the option to invest in the future of human rights defenders by creating an optional legacy gift.

**Write your will today and get started on protecting the things you care about at [FreeWill.com/Amnesty](https://FreeWill.com/Amnesty).**

**Questions? Please reach out to Sara Golden at [giftplanning@aiusa.org](mailto:giftplanning@aiusa.org) or by calling 212-633-4213.**

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**Adotei Akwei**

Interim Chief Collaboration  
Officer

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Chief Development Officer

**Julie Hong**

Interim Chief IDEA, People,  
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**Ira Lefton**

Chief Legal and Policy Officer

**Anand Mishra**

Interim Chief Impact Officer

**Liz Schaffer**

Interim Chief Financial Officer

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**Abdullah Chahin**

**Jessica Evans**

**James Henry**

**Angie Hougas**

**Benya Kraus**

**Phyl Pautrat**



# Thank You

We at Amnesty International USA are grateful to the hundreds of thousands of individuals, groups, and organizations who make our work possible through their generosity. Your contributions are essential to our ability to advance human rights for people around the world. Our donors have been our allies in the fight for human rights for over 60 years, helping us to free prisoners of conscience and speak out against human rights violations at home and abroad, creating real change through grassroots action and advocacy in the process. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to Amnesty International's mission – we could not do it without you.



# JOIN OUR MOVEMENT

Fight injustice and help create a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Contact Us Phone: 1-800-Amnesty Email: [aimember@aiusa.org](mailto:aimember@aiusa.org) [www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org)

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