

AMMAN
CENTER
FOR
HUMAN
RIGHTS
STUDIES

ANNUAL REPORT
2022



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FUNDAMENTALS AND PRIORITIES

The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) is an independent non-governmental Think Tank center advocating for the enhancement of democracy and human rights in Jordan and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Center's five priorities are:



THE RIGHT TO LIFE
THE RIGHT TO SPEAK
THE RIGHT TO THINK
THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE
WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Center works to achieve its goals by lobbying; spreading awareness via conferences and symposiums; writing official statements, declarations, reports, articles, and booklets; and establishing and maintaining relations with international organisations and embassies.

Furthermore, ACHRS has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Disseminating human rights and spreading knowledge about international human rights and humanitarian law in Jordan and the Arab region;
- Contributing to a more democratic society and enhancing the rule of law in a way that respects human rights;
- Providing a free platform for dialogue for coordinating efforts undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organisations that are active in human rights;
- Aiding governmental and non-governmental organisations in monitoring, documenting, and following up on human rights, as a step towards enforcing these rights on all legislative and executive levels;
- Participating in the revision of local laws and regulations in order to support and uphold human rights;
- Dedicating attention to those segments of society in need of special protection.

ACHRS participated in 7 conferences this year, on women's rights, the death penalty, vulnerable groups, and other human rights issues.

LAUNCH OF THE CARE JORDAN 2021 ANNUAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

9 FEBRUARY 2022

The CARE Jordan 2021 Annual Needs Assessment is the tenth installment of a research series begun in 2012. CARE International in Jordan uses the assessment to identify, analyze, and track the needs, vulnerabilities, and coping mechanisms of refugees and host communities in Jordan. It is targeted at addressing knowledge and information gaps related to a lack of comprehensive longitudinal data on the needs of vulnerable population groups in the country. The assessments have been carried out annually to support all key local, national and international actors in building a more holistic and targeted response to humanitarian and development challenges in Jordan.

Results from the 2021 needs assessment were presented, showing a need in Jordan for policy reform, recommendations for donor and international communities, and national and international humanitarian actors. Main recommendations for policy reform included refugee policy reform, e-learning accessibility, gender-sensitive curriculum for schools, and expanding economic opportunities. For donor and international communities, recommendations centered around expanding funding for refugee-led and women-led initiatives. For humanitarian and development actors, recommendations focused on supporting programs combating gender inequality and racial discrimination, educational inequities, and psychosocial support related to Covid-19.

ACHRS AT "WHY VOLUNTEERS?" WITH MALAK YACOUT, FOUNDER OF THE VOLUNTEER CIRCLE

22 SEPTEMBER 2022

ACHRS participated on the 22nd of September in Asfari Foundation's lecture on Volunteerism and Leadership, organised by Midan. The lecture presented the Volunteer Circle platform, a volunteer recruitment platform that matches organisations' needs with exemplary skilled volunteers. The volunteer circle started when founder Malak Yacout was a student but didn't know where to volunteer in Lebanon; the demand for volunteers was very high, but it was still easier to travel abroad to volunteer than in Lebanon. She then started the platform Volunteer Circle. This platform connects volunteers with specific skills with organisations and their needs directly to ensure that all the relevant skills are utilised in the position. Isabell Mansoor, the first legal woman to invest in the organisation, also participated in the meeting. She explained that sometimes you need a person and their skills, but you can't invest in them immediately, whereas a volunteer would be ideal. Then later, when the person gets hired, they are already trained for the job. You can recruit in many ways, and sometimes several roles; for example, So-Me manager, graphic designer, and community manager can be found in one volunteer. The many benefits of the organization-volunteer relationship were discussed and especially highlighted the importance of diversified skills, increased capacity, increased sustainability of an organisation, and increased employability for the volunteer.

Malak Yacout underlined the importance of personalising the message by reaching out to volunteers and focusing it on volunteer roles. So, a call for an open volunteer position will be much like any other job vacancy; if their skills match the vacancy, they can apply specifically for it, and no talents are wasted as the right people are chosen for places where their specific skills are needed. Today the Volunteer Circle is innovating further, and they are proud to be the place people generally turn to when they want to volunteer in Lebanon and the Levant.

The logo for the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) is displayed in a large, white, lowercase, sans-serif font against a dark purple background.

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (FIDH) CELEBRATES ITS 100TH YEAR OF EXISTENCE BY ORGANIZING NEW ELECTIONS

23-27 OCTOBER 2022

From the 23rd to the 27th of October, ACHRS director - Nizam Assaf - attended FIDH's 41st Congress in Paris, which marks the international organization's centenary year of existence. During the congress, which takes place every three years, 92 organizations from all over the world voted for their new President, as well as for 5 new General Secretaries and 15 new Vice Presidents. Alice Mogwe was unanimously re-elected as FIDH's president for a second three-year term, in addition to a new international board with members originating from all five continents. The Congress was also an opportunity for all organization members, but also international experts and over 180 participants from local civil society groups to address different matters related to human rights. This year's Congress, the focus was centred on the complexity and evolution of human rights issues such as the environmental crisis, the commons, the increase of poverty, the universality of rights and global governance.

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

31 OCTOBER - 1 NOVEMBER 2022

ACHRS participated in the fourth regional meeting on the International Decade of People of African Descent, established by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the African Union. The main objective of the International Decade is to promote respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African descent, as recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The meeting focused on three pillars: recognition, justice and development. Different representatives and delegates discussed the extensive history and mixture of African descendants in the Middle East. Some exciting or frequent problems that were discussed are:

History: All speakers mentioned the extensive history between Africa and the Middle East and advised looking at colonialism and slavery in the Middle East, as this affects men and women of African descent through marginalisation and inequality. However, there is not enough data available, which is needed to understand the impact of history on African descendants present-day. **Legislation:** In most Middle Eastern countries, there are formal laws in place combatting racism and discrimination, these are rarely applied in practice, though, and in some countries, legislations are even non-existent. In general, governments should adopt and strengthen legal frameworks by the Durban Declaration and ensure their implementation. **Media:** Racism is prevalent in the media; news about people of African descent is mostly negative. The African descendants are seen as a lower caste from the rest of the Arab world, which is painfully obvious in media around the Middle East. Speakers emphasised that eliminating racist voices in the media would be difficult since it means changing the culture and views on African descendants in the Middle East. **Inclusion:** African descendants are generally excluded from high positions in government and society; a problem discussed was how countries could help African descendants gain more visibility and inclusion in Arab countries. The speakers at the event stated that their countries are inclusive by law and are trying to work on including more communities in their societies. The speakers were deputies from Iraq and Tunisia. The regional meeting reinforced the need for further recognition, justice and development of African descendants in the Middle East. ACHRS also aims to improve the power of legislation and protect marginalised people's rights. Furthermore, as the focus lies on the human rights of people of African descent, ACHRS especially believes that legislative reform is a vital medium to work towards racial equality.

WATER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

3-4 NOVEMBER 2022

In anticipation of the March 2023 UN Summit on Water, UNOG organised a seminar on Water for Human Rights and Sustainable Development on November 3rd and 4th. This seminar aimed to establish access to safe water and sanitation as a human right.

Mr Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stated: "Water is the essence of life, yet nearly half of the world population lacks access to safely managed sanitation and drinking water. We must ensure that human rights are at the core of the UN water conference". Special attention went to addressing the precarious living standards of marginalized populations as a result of the lack of water and sanitation. Indigenous people, marginalized communities, and those in the global south, especially women, are amongst those suffering the most from poor sanitation and lack of readily available safe drinking water. Hence, access to safe drinking water and sanitation is an important tool in fighting inequality and eradicating extreme poverty, and improving living standards. The lack of safe water and sanitation is also a decisive indicator for the outbreak of conflict and the cause of many preventable diseases, in particular cholera. Consequently, access to safe water and sanitation should be considered as part of the right to health and right to life and, by extension, should be considered a human right. The summit also discussed the impact of privately managed water and found it further exacerbates inequality by making safe water less affordable for marginalised communities. Furthermore, private management of water should be abolished to better address the inequalities faced by marginalised communities when endeavouring to access safe water and affordable water. With this in mind, UNOG participants advocated for public or community management of water resources. These strategies have been proven to make water more physically and economically accessible and the outbreak of conflict less probable. Water should not be treated as a commodity but as a necessity and a human right. The practical and cultural importance of rivers, especially for indigenous peoples, was highlighted during the summit. In rural communities the loss of livelihoods



DEATH PENALTY CONFERENCE 2022

15-18 NOVEMBER 2022

The Director of ACHRS participated in the Death Penalty Conference in Berlin in November. ECPM or Together Against the Death Penalty has been campaigning since 2000 for the universal abolition of the death penalty through advocacy, militant awareness-raising actions and by uniting international abolitionist forces. ECPM supports the creation of national and regional coalitions, carries out educational actions with young people, conducts factfinding missions with people sentenced to death and builds capacity with local actors. Every three years, the association organizes the World Congress against the Death Penalty, the world's largest abolitionist event. The death penalty violates one of the most basic human rights enshrined in several international human rights conventions: the right to life.

Nizam Assaf, the director of ACHRS, also attended the event, learning from and participating in different workshops and readings. As universal abolition nears, it is now time for the abolitionist movement to reflect on its foundations and to envision the future. Representatives of different generations of the abolitionist movement vowed to renew their commitment to universal abolition. They will enhance their strategies for advocacy and raising awareness, as well as find new ways to sustain the movement and promote the abolition of capital punishment with the help of other advocacy movements.

Abolition in different countries requires different approaches, which should be constructed through intersectional and intergenerational discussions. Lawyers in the group discussion remarked that the death penalty is unconstitutional, however, in some retentionist countries public opinion remains in favor of the death penalty. Therefore, more diverse leadership in the political, judicial and social sectors is needed to contextualise the death penalty within different groups.

At least seven countries still carry the death penalty for rape and many others are considering reintroducing it. This practice blatantly disregards the findings of gender and children's rights experts that capital punishment does not deter rapists. While ensuring a victim-oriented approach, this roundtable argued that authorities should address the root causes of sexual violence rather than answer popular demands for limited justice. The coalition also wants to promote cooperation and partnership between the abolitionist movement, on the one hand, and women and children's rights activists, on the other. Both causes should advocate for universal abolition to highlight the fact that capital punishment is not an effective preventative measure against sexual violence.

The roundtable emphasised multiple aspects of rape and the death penalty. India's representative made an important remark stating that sexual violence often happens within closed circles, among family or friends. Therefore, it is particularly hard for victims of sexual violence to report to the police considering the perpetrator – who may be a family member or friend – could be sentenced to death. Another practical problem that the roundtable discussed is that the victims often cannot miss a day of work. Spending a day at court is too expensive for most of the population of India; therefore, victims are often not willing to sue their offender.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: 5TH PLENARY MEETING *14 DECEMBER 2022*

The fifth Plenary Meeting of ECOSOC focused on gender issues, human rights and women's rights. The meeting featured the adoption of a controversial draft resolution to remove Iran from the Commission on Status of Women, emphasizing the lack of rights in the country. The draft in question: "Removal of the Islamic Republic of Iran from membership in the Commission on the Status of Women for the remainder of its 2022-2026 term".

During the meeting, debate was sparked when discussing civil society voices and women's rights in Iran. Numerous representatives pointed out the brazen disregard of Iran's citizens' human rights and the persecution of women and girls. The representative of Iran called attention to the hostile US policy towards Iran and their hypocrisy regarding Israel and Palestinian women's rights. Ultimately the draft resolution was adopted by a recorded vote of 29 in favour to 8 against (Bolivia, China, Kazakhstan, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Zimbabwe), with 16 abstentions.

The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) published 38 statements in 2022, commenting on human rights issues across the MENA region. Through these statements, ACHRS condemned the death penalty and various rights violations and stood up for women and vulnerable populations.

SECRET DIARIES OF AFGHAN WOMEN PROVE DETERIORATION OF RIGHTS

8 JANUARY 2022

On the 6th of December, the BBC published five stories of Afghani women. These stories describe the changed reality for all Afghani women since the 15th of August when the Taliban took over and Kabul fell. ACHRS applauds the courage of the women to share their stories but strongly condemns the Taliban for stripping so many women of their rights.

IRAN'S NEW POPULATION BILL DENIES WOMEN ESSENTIAL HEALTHCARE

14 JANUARY 2022

Iran's new bill on "rejuvenation of the population and support of family" violates a woman's right to reproductive healthcare and information. Therefore, ACHRS condemns the new bill and urges significant amendments to achieve safe and legal population growth.

UNDP DOWNPLAYS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EGYPT

20 JANUARY 2022

After years of demonstrated human rights violations in Egypt, Amnesty, Cairo Institute for Human Rights and HRW are astonished by the misleading UNDP report. With this, UNDP fails the UN human rights-based approach to human development and loses reliability. ACHRS condemns this misleading report and urges Egyptian authorities to amend civil society laws.

POLICE BRUTALITY IN TUNISIA

23 JANUARY 2022

Recent protests against the Tunisian President were severely repressed by Tunisian law enforcement. Dozens of protestors were arrested and journalists were attacked by police. ACHRS condemns the violence used against protestors and journalists, as well as the use of police brutality as a deterrent to freedom of expression and the right to speak.



SAUDI ARABIA WHITEWASHES HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

24 JANUARY 2022

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have expressed their dissent and appealed to the international community not to deflect attention from Saudi Arabia's brutal crackdown on human rights defenders, despite the country's attempts to restore its image through rebranding campaigns. ACHRS condemns these attempts and calls for international accountability.

RAMY SAATH RELEASED, LOSES EGYPTIAN NATIONALITY

26 JANUARY 2022

Ramy Shaath, Egyptian-Palestinian activist, was released on the 6th of January after 900 days in prison. Shaath was very critical towards the Israeli occupation, calling for a boycott to protest against Tel Aviv's settlements in Palestine. His arbitrary detention was renewed 23 times without any investigations or proof. ACHRS condemns the use of arbitrary detention as a deterrent to freedom of expression and activism.

ARBITRARY DETENTION RELEASES – BITTERSWEET

VICTORY

27 JANUARY 2022

ACHRS warned of the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights. States can use the virus as an excuse to discriminatorily close borders to nationals it does not want and impose inhumane quarantine conditions. It is also important to make sure there is enough resources to accommodate everyone in need in hospitals.

KENYAN MIGRANT WORKER PROTESTS IGNORED BY LEBANESE CONSULATE

30 JANUARY 2022

Kenyan domestic migrant workers face highly discriminatory working conditions through the 'Kafala' or sponsorship system. However, with the current crisis in Lebanon, their situation has worsened. The economic crisis in Lebanon takes a high toll on the women, but they have had enough and demand repatriation. ACHRS condemns the Kenyan consulate's response of leaving the women to their own devices, camping in the harsh weather circumstances and without food or money.

POLITICAL DISSIDENT EXTRADITED TO BAHRAIN FACES LIFE IN PRISON

3 FEBRUARY 2022

Ahmad Jaffer Ali Muhammad was extradited on 24th January. The 48-year-old man was sued by Bahrain for terrorism and murder. However, several NGOs – including Human Rights Watch – have stated that Muhammad is a political dissident who was arrested and tortured by Bahraini authorities after several protests he took part in. ACHRS condemns his extradition.

IRANIAN WOMEN NEED LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST GBV

11 FEBRUARY 2022

The murderer of Mona Heydari is the latest identified episode of the string of femicides traceable to 'honor killings', namely the murder of women by male relatives. ACHRS joins the call of other human rights groups and appeals to the Iranian authorities to maximise all efforts to make the fight against gender-based violence a priority in their agenda.



HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE STILL DETAINED THREE YEARS AFTER ALGERIA'S HIRAK

10 MARCH 2022

Three years after the massive protests, at least 280 activists remain imprisoned in Algeria. They were detained arbitrarily based on blurred accusations. ACHRS condemns the detention of political opponents and activists, and calls for their immediate release.

81 EXECUTED IN ONE DAY, A SAD RECORD IN SAUDI ARABIA'S HISTORY

15 MARCH 2022

On 12th March, Saudi Arabia executed 81 persons, one of the biggest mass executions in the country's history. Many of the executed were condemned for crimes that did not qualify for the death penalty under international law. ACHRS condemns the executions and reaffirms its opposition to the use of the death penalty in all cases.

ISRAELI OCCUPATION CONTINUES APARTHEID REGIME

17 MARCH 2022

On February 1st, Amnesty International published a 280-page report on "Israel's institutionalized and systematic discrimination against Palestinians," upholding the apartheid classification. ACHRS advocates the recognition of the institutionalised system of discrimination and oppression against Palestinians as an apartheid regime and condemns the use of excessive and undue force by Israeli forces.

COMPANIES' GREED PERPETUATES OCCUPATION OF WESTERN SAHARA

23 MARCH 2022

Since Morocco announced the 'National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Plan' in 2008, European companies are involved in Moroccan renewable energy projects on the occupied territories of Western Sahara. Through these projects, Morocco perpetuates its illegal occupation. ACHRS condemns this occupation and calls on the involved companies to withdraw from any Moroccan renewable energy projects in Western Sahara.

WAR IN UKRAINE BEARING DOWN HARD ON SYRIA AND YEMEN

24 MARCH 2022

Since the invasion of Russia in Ukraine, the MENA region is in danger of facing severe implications on basic necessities. Syria and Yemen, which are already in unstable conditions, risk food insecurity or even famine. Seeing no signs of a possible halt to the invasion in Ukraine, ACHRS can only hope for extra humanitarian aid in Yemen and Syria.

EU APPLIES DOUBLE STANDARDS ON REFUGEES

27 APRIL 2022

On February 24th, 2022, the Russian autocrat Putin started his invasion of Ukraine, forcing millions of Ukrainians to leave their homes and country. While the EU reacted within a few weeks by granting them the rights to live, work and access social services, African and Arab migrants are still illegally pushed back by EU member states, drowning in the Mediterranean, cooped in detention centres, or mulcted of their right to seek asylum in a safe country through the EU-Turkey or EU-Libya deal. ACHRS endorses the implementation of sweeping measures to help Ukrainian refugees, whereas it strictly condemns the substantial discrimination of refugees from other parts of the world.



AFGHANS NEED URGENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

5 MAY 2022

A recent report highlights the chaotic situation faced by Afghans. Many pandemics hit the country and the barely existing health system is unable to protect Afghans efficiently. ACHRS calls on the international community to react and to help support vulnerable people.

STOP THE DEPORTATION OF REFUGEES IN THE UK TO RWANDA

11 MAY 2022

New UK immigration law is in its final step of being realized, sending asylum seekers to Rwanda to get their asylum requests processed, with the first flight with 15 Syrian refugees set to leave this June 14.

BIDEN'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING ZIONISM: A MAJOR THREAT TO PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

27 JULY 2022

Associating Zionism with the Jewish people's right to freedom and peace while it manifests at the expense of the Palestinian people's livelihood makes it harder to denounce the occupation without weaponized accusations of antisemitism. By affirming the "Jewish nature" of the land occupied by Israel, the American President has marginalized the Palestinians and thus legitimized the occupation.



ISRAEL'S ASSAULT ON GAZA: CIVILIANS ONCE AGAIN THE MAIN VICTIMS OF GRUESOME ATTACKS

8 AUGUST 2022

During an interview for an Israeli channel, IDF spokesman Ron Koshav confirmed that "Operation Breaking Dawn" was a "targeted campaign against the Palestinian Islamic Jihad" that threatened the safety of Israeli citizens. ACHRS deplors that once again, the state of Israel is framing its aggression on Gaza as retaliation or self-defense, thus fully violating international law since no attacks targeting Israel were committed.

CLIMATE MIGRANTS OR CLIMATE REFUGEES; THE LEGAL VOID OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT

17 AUGUST 2022

More and more people are forcibly displaced because of Climate Change implications. Extreme weather events, such as floods, cyclones, prolonged droughts, and extreme heat, affect people's livelihoods and security. Human rights and Climate Change are interconnected, but displaced people fall into a legal void regarding protection and support.



ISRAEL'S UNLAWFUL SHUT DOWN OF PALESTINIAN NGO'S

23 AUGUST 2022

Israeli armed forces entered the premises of 7 Palestinian organizations from the civil society and proceeded with forced closures and confiscations. This follows a declaration by Israel's defense minister Benny Gantz stating that Israeli law now classified these organizations as terrorists. ACHRS expresses its solidarity with the targeted NGOs and calls for an immediate and unequivocal reaction from the International Community

PROTECT JORDANIAN WOMEN; IN ONLY 72 HOURS, 2 WOMEN HAVE BEEN MURDERED BY THEIR HUSBANDS

28 AUGUST 2022

Governmental efforts have failed to ensure the safety of its female population, which is a flagrant violation of the right to life and to live in dignity in Jordanian society. ACHRS condemns the current status of women's safety in Jordanian society and calls on the Jordanian government to improve its efforts to achieve gender based equality. The lives of Jordanian women matter and should not be taken in vain.

JORDAN IS EXCLUDING NONSYRIAN REFUGEES FROM PROTECTION

6 SEPTEMBER 2022

Jordan is discriminating against refugees based on nationality. Non-Syrian refugees in Jordan are not provided with the same funding or support that Syrian refugees are. Both Syrian and non-Syrian refugees flee from similarly dangerous and insecure conditions, yet non-Syrians are in practice excluded from obtaining asylum status. Jordan's treatment of non-Syrian refugees violates the international principles of nonrefoulement and non-discrimination of refugees based on their nationality. ACHRS condemns discrimination against refugees of different nationalities and urges Jordan to stop the freezing of UNHCR asylum registration for non-Syrians. Additionally, ACHRS urges Jordan to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention, besides facilitating a better process for the NGO's applying for permission to carry out non-Syrian aid projects and encourages the international community to reserve funding for all refugees regardless of nationality.

SOCIAL UNREST IN IRAN FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF MAHSA AMINI

22 SEPTEMBER 2022

A wave of protests took place in Iran following the tragic death of Mahsa Amini. The young woman died following a violent arrest by the Iranian morality police. The country has since witnessed unprecedented public demonstrations in strong condemnation of the barbaric acts of the morality police and against the regime in general. ACHRS joins all leaders and spokespersons who expressed support for the Iranian risking their lives for their freedom. We denounce the dominance of the use of penal punishment by Iranian authorities, who also explicitly repress the freedom of expression within the nation. ACHRS joins the global condemnation of the Iranian morality police's brutal and arbitrary repression. We also encourage an increase in transparency regarding the actions of Iranian authorities to better pave the path to respect and justice in the MENA region.



NEED FOR MORE SUPPORT AND INCLUSION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN SYRIA

11 OCTOBER 2022

Since the war in Syria, many people living in the affected regions have depended on external aid. In some cases, the most vulnerable in society have been neglected. Children with disabilities affected by the war lack the necessary resources to ensure a safe, healthy, inclusive, and supportive environment.

SHAME AND EXCLUSION OF IRAQI VICTIMS – ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES OF TRAFFICKING IN IRAQ

6 OCTOBER 2022

Women and children in forced marriages are vulnerable to sex trafficking and have an especially hard time finding a way out. trap women and girls in sex work. Increasingly widespread domestic violence pushes women and children in forced marriages out on the street, thus putting perceived shame on the family by leaving their marriage. Getting expelled by one's social security leaves them very vulnerable to sex traffickers, known to use the concept of shame to trap women and girls in sex work.

JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS ON BASIC CIVIL RIGHTS

2 NOVEMBER 2022

The maintenance of peace and stability in Jordan is not a justification for abusing the rights of its citizens and imposing severe restrictions on civil society.

A NEW "DISINFORMATION" LAW OBSTRUCTS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN TURKEY

5 NOVEMBER 2022

A recent "disinformation" law has sparked new controversy in the Turkish parliament. The vaguely defined law, which targets news platforms, social media content and journalists, has been sharply criticised for being an extension of Erdoğan's censorship policy and further restricting freedom of expression ahead of Turkey's 2023 elections.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH FINDS INSTANCES OF TORTURE USED TO GAIN CONFESSIONS IN TRIALS IN BAHRAIN

14 NOVEMBER 2022

The Bahraini courts have sentenced prisoners to the death penalty, violating the state's laws. HRW is concerned with the safety and the fair trial of the prisoners. In October, a report that describes the situation the prisoner have to deal with on a daily base.

KEEP WATCHING QATAR'S TREATMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS AFTER THE WORLD CUP 2022

21 NOVEMBER 2022

In light of the current protests in Iran, the first death sentence has been issued this week against one of the protesters who was arrested. It is estimated that over 300 people have already died during the ongoing protests over the last 2 months, and thousands have been arrested. More than 20 others could also face the death penalty.

ARRESTED PROTESTANTS IN IRAN FACE DEATH SENTENCES

20 NOVEMBER 2022

In light of the current protests in Iran, the first death sentence has been issued this week against one of the protesters who was arrested. It is estimated that over 300 people have already died during the ongoing protests over the last 2 months, and thousands have been arrested. More than 20 others could also face the death penalty.



ISRAELI SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM: HEAVY CONSEQUENCES FOR PALESTINIANS

23 NOVEMBER 2022

The Israeli authorities use surveillance as a tool to eliminate rights, physical space or presence, and even – in extreme cases – life.

COP27: GLOBAL SOUTH DEMANDS CLIMATE CHANGE REPARATIONS

26 NOVEMBER 2022

The reporting on COP27 has been largely sidetracked by the crackdown on civil activism and the human rights violations of its host country, Egypt. The case of Alaa Abdel Fattah, in particular, has garnered special interest. The civil activist who rose to prominence during the 2011 Arab Spring went on a hunger strike and even briefly stopped drinking water at the start of COP27 in protest of his unlawful detention



IRAQ: JUSTICE FOR 800 KILLED IN OCTOBER 2019 PROTESTS REMAINS ELUSIVE

5 DECEMBER 2022

October 2019 witnessed the start of a new popular protest movement in Iraq. However, security forces violently cracked down on the democratic protests resulting in over 800 fatalities. Three years on, the victims and their families still await accountability from the perpetrators.

SAUDI ARABIAN TRIBE FORCIBLY EVICTED TO ACCOMMODATE NEOM PROJECT

12 DECEMBER 2022

Saudi Arabia does not shy away from harsh measures when it comes to reforms and diversifying its economy. Over the past few years, a general trend can be seen in Saudi Arabia with regard to silencing dissent in the name of modernisation. This not only applies to the crackdown on communities but also the use of the SCC and intimidation and silencing of peaceful activists.

MOROCCO VIOLATES RIGHTS OF LONG-TERM PRISONERS

13 DECEMBER 2022

Moroccan Courts have sentenced Sahrawi prisoners in Western Sahara to lengthy imprisonment in unfair trials, according to Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International. The prisoners were convicted for their alleged role in the lethal violence of November 8th 2010 when the Moroccan police dismantled a Sahrawi protest decrying their socio-economic situation.

IRAN EXECUTES FIRST OF MAHSA AMINI PROTESTERS

14 DECEMBER 2022

On December 8th Iran carried out the first known execution of a prisoner involved in the Mahsa Amini protests. Three days later a second man was publicly executed in an apparent execution spree to deter protesters and discourage the popular movement.



Along with conferences, research, and statements, the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies also engaged in a Youth Leadership Program, meetings with other organisations, signing protocols and hosting students.



2022 THIRD BATCH OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Over the months of February through September, ACHRS hosted a group of 25 students, and facilitated their Youth Leadership Program. The group consisted of bachelor and master students ages 20 to 25, stemming from different governorates in Jordan. The group was split up into two groups of 10 and 15 students, who all followed 120 hours of training on subjects such as religion, law and politics. In more than 20 sessions different participants lectured the students in these subjects. These participants stemmed from civil society and the academic community including experts, trainers and professors. Furthermore, the students participated as speakers in four roundtables in four governorates: Al Balqa, Al Zarqa, Mafraq and Jerash. In these roundtables they shared their knowledge in specific issues, like women's rights, political (youth) participation and the right to free education. We thank all participants and students for making this year's Youth Leadership Program a great success.



THE AMMAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES SIGNS A COOPERATION PROTOCOL WITH THE EGYPTIAN FEDERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICIES.

The signing of a cooperation protocol between the Amman Center and the Egyptian Federation in Amman and Cairo on Monday, March 21, 2022 came as a result of dialogue and interaction between the two institutions with the aim of opening horizons for developing a joint cooperation between them in the field of human rights and social protection in the Arab world, especially in Jordan and Egypt.

MEETING OF THE DELEGATION OF THE ELECTIONS NETWORK IN THE ARAB WORLD WITH THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE SUPERVISORY COMMISSION FOR ELECTIONS IN LEBANON.

The network delegation was represented by Dr. Gulshan Saghlam, the mission coordinator, human rights activist Hooker Getu, head of the mission, and lawyer Dr. Mustafa Yaghi, member of the mission.





VISIT FROM SWEDISH STUDENTS

On Wednesday 2nd of November 2022, ACHRS welcomed a group of students from Sweden. The group was a mix of women from Sweden, France, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary, the United States, Ethiopia and Iran. They are part of the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund, which was founded in 1935 and has been a fully independent student association since 1986. Its main aim is to encourage students to participate in and disseminate information about economic and political debates. As part of this, they also include national and international trips as part of their activities. Recent activities include a trip to Amman, Jordan, with a visit to the Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies. The theme of their trip was women, peace, and security. In order to capture the interest of the main objectives, messages and activities of the Centre, the five priorities of the Centre outlined to them including related activities and projects set up to achieve the goals of these pillars. Amongst others, they were presented with one of the traineeships on women's rights that aims to equip women with knowledge and skill sets in political leadership positions which included 170 women from different countries that have participated so far. The participants were also presented with recent international declarations that ACHRS is working on in collaboration with other Human Rights organisations. Finally, ACHRS's recent Interns addressed the intern's program, their work and contributions. At the end of the meeting, there was time for all participants to ask questions about the centre and the situation in Jordan and the MENA region.

Overall, the students expressed satisfaction and gratitude for being welcomed to the centre and having the opportunity to get to know a local human rights organisation first-hand. ACHRS thanked and appreciated the students for expressing their interests.



EVENT FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 74TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE GRADUATION OF THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

On the occasion of the celebration of the 74th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the graduation of the students who completed the Youth Leadership Program, ACHRS organised an event at the Zaha Cultural Center in Amman. More than 25 participants of the Youth Leadership Program received their diplomas. ACHRS had the honor of hosting His Excellency Engineer Musa Al-Maaytah, president of I am a Human society for Rights of People with disability in Jordan, Asia Yaghi, the general director of the Youth Organization of all Jordan, Mr. Abdul Rahim Al-Zawahra, in addition to members of the Scientific Council of ACHRS, Dr. Lubna Bayouk and Dr. Marcel Gwenat. ACHRS also had the honor of hosting Dominik Bartsch, representative of the UNDP and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan, who held an inspiring speech on human rights in Jordan:

"Human Rights Day is an occasion to remind us ALL of the need to "Stand Up for Human Rights", our rights and those of others, especially during times where the world is facing new and ongoing challenges."

Furthermore, we had the privilege of hosting Maria Hadjitheodosiou, EU Ambassador to Jordan, who stressed the importance of alliances:

"Those of us who believe in the ideals enshrined in the Declaration have to join forces. As former UNSG Kofi Annan said: "the human family will not enjoy development without security, will not enjoy security without development, and will not enjoy either without respect for human rights""

(The full speeches are included on page 30)

A few participants who completed the Youth Leadership program also had the chance to give an inspiring speech to their fellow students. The event concluded with the official graduation of the students, in which they received their diplomas. Overall, the event was a success with some great perspectives on human rights and engaged students.



Graduates of the Youth Leadership Program with the speakers of the event

**Commemoration of the 74 Anniversary of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
& Celebration of the Graduates of the
Amman Center of Human Rights Studies
Youth Leadership Program
08/12/2022**

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Dear Friends,

Human Rights Day is a special day for all of us. We have just been reminded by the previous speakers how the Universal Declaration of Human Rights embodies our joint commitment to build a world free from fear and want, where no one is left behind. The Declaration was indeed signed by all our countries, creating a shared vision of humanity.

So today is a day when all people and governments should reflect on the state of human rights around the world, and in our own countries.

No country is perfect; no one can sit on its laurels. We all have our shortcomings. What defines us is how we strive to overcome them.

In the European Union, we are deeply committed to the values enshrined in the Declaration. They are reflected in our founding treaties and in all the agreements with our partners.

We are striving to promote and protect human rights both within the EU and in our globally. This lays in the heart of our actions. We are keen to work together with All our partners and support those who suffer from human rights violations.

Today we remember the struggles of human rights defenders who display great courage in giving voices to those who cannot speak for themselves.

Also, we should not forget what each one of us can do to improve the world we live in. We don't all need to be activists or politicians; small steps in our own daily lives and homes can lead to better societies where everyone is safe and their rights are respected.

For example, we are reaching the end of this year's global campaign called "16 days of activism against gender-based violence" with many activities also here in Jordan drawing attention to this serious problem. Women's rights are human rights; we are born equal as stated by the very first article of the Declaration.



Speech of H.E Mrs. Maria Hadjithiou Dosieu
Ambassador of the Europea Commemoration of the 74 anniversary UN HR Declaration

We have been working closely with Jordan on human rights for a long time; it is an essential part of our Association Agreement reconfirmed in the successive joint Partnership Priorities.

Our programmes support the rule of law, good governance and human rights, working closely with the government, civil society and independent institutions like the IEC, the JNCW, the National center for Human rights or the Higher council of persons with disabilities to name only a few.

We have also been supporting Jordan's generous hosting of thousands of refugees, in a joint commitment to help them live in dignity away from their homes.

This brings me to the larger scale where we in the EU attach great importance to the rules-based international order that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is part of. We once again find ourselves at a crossroads, between zero-sum competition and brute power politics on one side and dignity, cooperation and solidarity on the other.

Those of us who believe in the ideals enshrined in the Declaration have to join forces. As former UNSG Kofi Annan said: "the human family will not enjoy development without security, will not enjoy security without development, and will not enjoy either without respect for human rights".

Let me finish by turning to the Youth Leadership Programme graduates. Congratulations for completing this training. As you embark on your path towards leadership, always keep in mind the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. They encapsulate the best of our humanity. It is a moral compass that will help you become a better leader, a better person. It is in fact a beacon for us all.

Check against delivery

Speech of Mr. Dominik Bartsch, UN Resident Coordinator a.i.

Amman Center for Human Rights Studies in collaboration with All Jordan Youth Commission event on the commemoration of 74th anniversary of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights

Date and time: Thursday, 8 December 2022 from 16:00 - 17:00

Speech duration: 5 - 7 minutes

Place: Zaha Cultural Center (Location: <https://goo.gl/maps/U79f3abgDNABH5oL9>)

Your Excellency Eng. Musa Al Maaytah, Chairman of the Independent Election Commission,

Your Excellency Maria Hadjitheodosiou, Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to Jordan,

Distinguished participants, young change makers, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to speak to you today at this event celebrating Human Rights Day and the 74th anniversary of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, and the graduation ceremony of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies Youth Leadership Programme.

Back in 1948, following the devastation of the Second World War, the world took an enormous step forward with the creation of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, which enshrines the rights of all human beings. To this day, the Declaration continues to inspire positive change towards a more equal and inclusive world for the benefit of us all.

And the world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history. In Jordan, 68% of the population are under 30 years old!

I am therefore happy to see here so many young actors involved in advancing human rights.



Speech of Mr. Dominik Bartsch, UN Resident Coordinator a.i.

Allow me to share with you one story of a young person who has inspired me greatly. The story of Muzoon Almellehan, a Syrian refugee and education activist. She was forced to flee her country in 2013, and despite a very difficult life in the Zaatari camp that time, she believed that education is a right for all girls. She began advocating for girls' education as part of a back-to-school campaign, during which she went tent to tent, speaking with the parents of children at risk of child marriage or child labour. Now she is a UNICEF good-will ambassador working around the globe, advocating for the right to education! And she is one of many young advocates at your age or younger.

All young people have the right to participate in public affairs. This is enshrined in article 21 of the UDHR and article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The United Nations Youth Strategy 2030 recognizes young people's agency, resilience and positive contributions as agents of change.

You have many tools at your disposal to be agents of change:

- The Jordan National Youth Strategy, the Political, Electoral and Economic Modernization Processes and many other strategies have you at the heart of change.
- You are connected to each other like never before.
- Many of you have the motivation or already contribute to the resilience of your communities, propose innovative solutions, drive social progress and inspire political change, in urban as well as rural contexts. And the story of Muzoon is just one testimonial to that.

But you also face incredible challenges and even life-threatening risks, disproportionately carried by girls and young women in many parts of the world.

Just last week, it was recognized that Jordan has become the most water stressed country in the world, just to mention one particular challenge which you are facing here.

The United Nations in Jordan is there to support you to identify the youth-specific barriers and challenges you face in accessing your human rights and to use this information to identify and advocate for actions that could facilitate your access to these rights.

The United Nations supports platforms through which your voice can be amplified, and your engagement can be advanced such as the [Nahno.org](#) volunteerism platform, the [Jordan Civil Society Network for Displacement](#) which brings different actors together in favor of the protection and assistance to displaced persons and in support of communities hosting them. And our [United Nations Volunteer Programme](#) supports national youth volunteers to serve with a United Nations entity to accelerate sustainable development and promote peace.

The United Nations in Jordan is also committed to enhance its efforts to promote human rights education and training for youth, as well as global citizenship and sustainable development education, without discrimination, to foster civic awareness and participation, volunteerism and a culture of peace and non-violence among young people.

In September this year, we established for the first time a UN Youth Advisory Council which consists of 13 young members, who advise us on the strategic opportunities and actions to address youth issues, they advocate for realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights and bring some voices of youth in Jordan to the forefront.

I hope that you, as young leaders who benefitted from this Programme will also contribute to these endeavors.

Your active participation in the 2023 preparations for the upcoming Jordan Universal Periodic Review Process could be one first step to assess the implementation of human rights in Jordan and make concrete recommendations for the future.

Human Rights Day is an occasion to remind us ALL of the need to **“Stand Up for Human Rights”**, our rights and those of others, especially during times where the world is facing new and ongoing challenges.

We all have a role to play.

Together, we can realize **“Dignity, Freedom and Justice for All”**.