

Health Organization, to prevent the reappearance of preventable diseases.

### Right to food

By December a basic food basket for a household of five cost the equivalent of USD 498.47, while the monthly minimum wage was only USD 2.36, leaving the majority of the population facing severe food insecurity.

In February, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food visited Venezuela. He reported that nearly 82% of the population were living in poverty and 53% were exposed to extreme poverty with insufficient income to purchase a basic food basket. He reported that people were having to reduce portion sizes, skip meals and buy less nutritious food items as a result of poverty. He also stated that women were disproportionately affected by food poverty since they were often the caregivers for their families and communities while working for a wage. Some women resorted to exchanging sex for food. Pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls were particularly at risk of undernourishment.

### SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

No progress was made in improving sexual and reproductive rights, and abortion remained criminalized. The humanitarian emergency in Venezuela continued to obstruct women's and girls' access to sexual and reproductive rights. According to figures from the NGO Network of Women Peacebuilders, 40% of women of reproductive age did not use contraceptive methods due to the high cost and lack of access.

### LGBTI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

LGBTI rights continued to be neglected. The Venezuelan Observatory of LGBTIQ+ Violence reported that 68 LGBTIQ+ women had been victims of discrimination or violence.

### SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

During the first half of the year, the Centre for Justice and Peace documented 58 femicides and 27 attempted femicides. The Network of Women Peacebuilders reported that 71% of

women had suffered psychological violence and 41% physical violence in 2024.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights expressed concern about the ongoing impacts of illegal mining on the life, health and survival of the Yanomami People, specifically in the Orinoco Mining Arc. The commission warned that Indigenous Peoples were facing an acute health crisis due to water contamination by mercury in the Amazon region. This impacted hunting and fishing and as a consequence increased malnutrition.

- 
1. "Venezuela: Tech companies set dangerous precedent with app for reporting anti-government protesters", 7 August 1

## VIET NAM

---

### Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

---

**Human rights defenders, journalists and people detained for political reasons faced torture and inhumane prison conditions. The government used counterterrorism laws against activists and Montagnards from the Dak Lak region, resulting in arbitrary arrests and detentions. New laws were introduced to police social media and further silence dissent. High levels of pollution persisted. Death sentences continued to be imposed and there was heightened concern over an intensifying crackdown on civil society space.**

### BACKGROUND

Four different presidents during the year reflected the internal tumult within the Communist Party. A concurrent anti-corruption drive targeted high-profile political as well as business figures. Viet Nam's human rights record was examined by the UN. A deadly attack on two police posts in Dak Lak region in June 2023 elicited a furious response from the government in March. The Montagnard Indigenous Peoples

continued to face decades-long systemic repression and discrimination, rooted in a complex history of marginalization and lack of protection of their traditional land rights and freedom of religion.

### **TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT**

Imprisoned human rights defenders, journalists and activists continued to be subjected to torture and other ill-treatment including denial of adequate healthcare.

In October, human rights defenders Trịnh Bá Tư and Bùi Văn Thuận, both serving eight-year prison sentences for “anti-state propaganda”, began a hunger strike at Nghe An prison No 6. Tư, a land rights defender, had previously reported on prison conditions during his detention. His mother and brother were held in different prisons, facing similar conditions. Thuận, a former teacher and a member of the Muong ethnic group in Hoa Binh province, protested about human rights violations and environmental issues.

After 21 days, Tư and Thuận ended their hunger strike when authorities agreed to improve conditions, including opening the “tiger cage” used to hold imprisoned activists in solitary confinement in Nghe An province. A “tiger cage” is a torture device made of iron bars, providing a space of only 1m (3.3 feet) wide in which to move around. Prisoners were reportedly locked in these cages for months at a time.

### **Journalists**

In November the family of journalist Lê Hữu Minh Tuấn described his health as rapidly declining, fearing an untreated cancer. Tuấn is a member of the Vietnam Independent Journalists' Association (IJAVN), serving an 11-year prison sentence for making, storing and disseminating information “for the purpose of opposing the State of Socialist Republic of Vietnam”, under Article 117 of the Criminal Code. Two others imprisoned from the IJAVN, Phạm Chí Dũng (15-year sentence) and Nguyễn Tường Thụy (11-year sentence), also reported their health degradation.

In October, blogger and YouTuber Đường Văn Thái was given a 12-year sentence by

the Hanoi People's Court after he was accused of making and spreading information aimed at opposing the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Granted refugee status in Thailand in 2019, Đường Văn Thái went missing in Bangkok on 13 April 2023. The circumstances of his disappearance suggested Vietnamese state agents may have been involved in capturing him and taking him back to Viet Nam, according to witness testimony and audio recordings on file with Amnesty International.

### **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

In September, Viet Nam refused to adopt numerous recommendations linked to freedom of expression issued by the UN's UPR procedure. According to Amnesty International's records, at least 45 journalists, human rights defenders and citizens have been arrested, often on spurious charges, since April 2023. The situation for civil society worsened amid a more general political tightening. Civicus, an NGO monitoring global civic space, rated Viet Nam as “closed”, the lowest possible ranking.

### **Digital surveillance**

On 9 November the government issued a decree which targeted social media operators – including Meta's Facebook and Alphabet's Google – requiring Vietnamese users to authenticate accounts by providing a mobile phone or personal identification number. It requires operators to provide details on Vietnamese users to the Ministry of Information and Communications and the Ministry of Public Security, and remove content at either Ministry's request.

This decree continued the strict policing of online freedom of expression by the Ministry of Public Security.

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS**

In January, more than 100 Montagnard people were convicted on terrorism-related charges connected to the 2023 attack on police posts. The UN condemned the use of counterterrorism laws against the Montagnards.

In August, UN Special Rapporteurs accused the government of “inciting civilian vigilantes from a majority ethnic group to hunt down suspects believed to be Montagnard Indigenous Peoples” following the 2023 attack. Bùm Byă, one of those arrested, died in custody on 8 March after being tortured. Two Montagnards told Amnesty International they were tortured by authorities to force confessions after being arbitrarily arrested following the attack.

## RIGHT TO HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

In June, UN representatives from WHO, UNDP and UNICEF called for stronger action to counter Viet Nam’s pollution problem. This followed IQAir’s annual survey, released in March, which named Viet Nam the second most polluted country in the ASEAN region, with the 22nd worst air quality globally. According to Ember, a global energy think tank, Viet Nam generated 42% of its electricity from non-fossil fuel sources, higher than the global average of 39%. However, coal use, imports and coal-fired emissions all climbed to record levels.

Detained environmental activist Đặng Đình Bách, a leader of the climate change movement in Viet Nam that had sought a just transition from fossil fuels, began a third hunger strike early in the year. He was protesting against his detention conditions, which were described by the UN in February as “deplorable”. Initially arrested on 24 June 2021, he was sentenced to five years in prison for “tax evasion” and held in a prison wing reserved for imprisoned activists in Nghe An Province. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention had deemed his detention to be arbitrary.

## DEATH PENALTY

The government made no observable progress to end its use of the death penalty, including for economic crimes and drug-related offences. Its use remained shrouded in secrecy.

Trương Mỹ Lan, a well-known business figure and the chairwoman of property giant Vạn Thịnh Phát, was found guilty in April of fraud and embezzling billions of dollars from

Saigon Commercial Bank. Lan was sentenced to death, although she may avoid this outcome if she can return some of the embezzled assets. Her case was perceived as the highest profile in the “Blazing Furnaces” anti-corruption campaign.

# YEMEN

## Republic of Yemen

**All parties to the conflict, which controlled different parts of Yemen, continued to arbitrarily detain, forcibly disappear and unjustly prosecute human rights defenders, journalists, human rights and humanitarian workers, and people critical of the authorities’ human rights records and policies. Courts across Yemen sentenced people to death, sometimes after grossly unfair trials. All parties to the conflict arbitrarily restricted delivery of humanitarian aid. The Huthi de facto authorities continued to ban women from travelling without a male relative, undermining their right to work and other human rights. All parties to the conflict failed to protect women’s right to privacy online and to provide redress to survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Prosecutions of LGBTI people continued. All parties to the conflict contributed to environmental degradation.**

## BACKGROUND

The de facto continuation of the UN-brokered nationwide ceasefire contributed to a further decline in fighting and cross-border attacks. However, all parties to the conflict continued to sporadically attack civilian areas and frontlines including in Ta’iz, Sa’adah and Bayda governorates.

The Huthi armed forces attacked at least 57 commercial and military vessels in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, claiming they were linked to Israel, the USA or the UK. On 6 March, Huthi armed forces attacked the MV *True Confidence* in the Gulf of Aden, killing three