

AMNESTY

INTERNATIONAL

REPORT 2022/23

**THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S
HUMAN RIGHTS**



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INTERNATIONAL



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Amnesty International is impartial. We take no position on issues of sovereignty, territorial disputes or international political or legal arrangements that might be adopted to implement the right to self-determination. This report is organized according to the countries we monitored during the year. In general, they are independent states that are accountable for the human rights situation on their territory.

First published in 2023 by
Amnesty International Ltd

Peter Benenson House,
1, Easton Street,
London WC1X 0DW
United Kingdom

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Index: POL 10/5670/2023

ISBN: 978-0-86210-502-0

Original language: English

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This report documents Amnesty
International's work and concerns
through 2022.

The absence of an entry in this
report on a particular country or
territory does not imply that no
human rights violations of
concern to Amnesty International
have taken place there during the
year. Nor is the length of a
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entity's legitimacy.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Puma Energy, the main foreign company involved in the handling and distribution of aviation fuel in Myanmar, announced in October that it was leaving the country and selling its business in Myanmar.⁸ Aviation fuel imported and distributed by foreign and domestic companies was essential to the Myanmar military in carrying out air strikes. At least three other foreign companies announced that they were ending or suspending their involvement in the provision of aviation fuel to Myanmar during 2022.

Meta's (formerly Facebook) algorithms and business practices were found to have substantially contributed to grave human rights violations suffered by the Rohingya during 2017 by amplifying anti-Rohingya content and enabling and encouraging Myanmar military action against them.⁹

1. "Myanmar: International community must do more to protect brave protesters", 22 April
2. "Myanmar: 15 days felt like 15 years: Torture in detention since the Myanmar coup", 2 August
3. "Myanmar: First execution in decades mark atrocious escalation in state repression", 25 July
4. Myanmar: "Bullets rained from the sky": War crimes and displacement in eastern Myanmar, 31 May
5. "Myanmar: Deadly air strikes in Kachin State appear to fit pattern of unlawful attacks", 24 October
6. Myanmar: Deadly Cargo: Exposing the supply chain that fuels war crimes in Myanmar, 3 November
7. "Myanmar: Military's use of banned landmines in Kayah State amounts to war crimes", 20 July
8. "Myanmar: Puma Energy to leave amid scrutiny of aviation fuel supplies", 5 October
9. Myanmar: The social atrocity: Meta and the right to remedy for the Rohingya, 29 September

NAMIBIA

Republic of Namibia

Head of state and government: Hage Geingob

Police continued to use excessive force against protesters. A cybercrime bill threatened to curtail the rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly and

privacy. Early marriage persisted. Survey results showed that most Nambians believe gender-based violence is common in their communities. Parliament held public consultations on petitions to decriminalize abortion. LGBTI people's rights were curtailed. Mining companies' activities threatened to damage the environment and undermine the rights of Indigenous peoples.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE

On 13 May, Namibian Police Force officers used excessive force against peaceful protesters in the capital, Windhoek. Local traders were protesting after the authorities destroyed counterfeit goods confiscated from the traders. Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at the crowd, injuring protesters. A Namibian Broadcasting Corporation journalist was injured in the leg by a rubber bullet.

CYBERCRIME LEGISLATION

In February, the Institute for Public Policy Research raised concerns about the Electronic Transactions and Cybercrime Bill, which was tabled before parliament in the same month. If enacted, it could curtail the rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly and privacy. In particular, concerns were raised over provisions which would allow for arbitrary secret search warrants and grant excessive powers to the minister of information and communication technology.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

In March, UNICEF reported that 64,200 girls and women in Namibia were married when they were below the age of 18, and 15,500 of them were below the age of 15. According to UNICEF, 38% of women and girls in early marriages, surveyed in Namibia, reported having experienced gender-based violence, including sexual violence, within the marriage.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In March, research network Afrobarometer released survey findings showing that 57% of Namibians believe that gender-based violence is common in their communities. In

one case reported in December, a 32-year-old woman was killed by her intimate partner with an axe.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In June, the CEDAW Committee recommended that the government amend the pre-independence era Abortion and Sterilisation Act (No. 2 of 1975) to decriminalize abortion in all cases, “recognizing” that such criminalization “is a form of gender-based violence against women”. In October, following petitions from women’s rights organizations to decriminalize or legalize abortion, the parliamentary Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Social Development and Family Affairs held public consultations with a view to amending the law.

LGBTI PEOPLE’S RIGHTS

In January, the High Court of Namibia dismissed applications by spouses of Namibian citizens who were seeking to regularize their immigration status on the basis of same-sex marriages concluded outside the country. The court ruled that their marriage status was not recognized under Namibian law. While it expressed sympathy for the couples’ situations, the court said it was bound by a previous Supreme Court judgment.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

In July, the High Court dismissed an urgent application made by several organizations, in which they asked the court to stop a Canadian mining company, Reconnaissance Energy Namibia, from continuing its exploration activities in the Kavango regions. Conservation activists and organizations had been challenging the company’s drilling for oil since 2020. Indigenous peoples and local communities continued to express concerns about the potential decline in the water table and loss of valuable wildlife and wild plant products as a result of the operations.

NEPAL

Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

Head of state: Bidya Devi Bhandari

Head of government: Pushpa Kamal Dahal (replaced Sher Bahadur Deuba in December)

The authorities carried out arbitrary arrests to limit freedom of expression and security forces continued to use unnecessary and excessive force to disperse protests. At least one protester was shot dead. Efforts toward securing truth, justice and reparation for crimes under international law and other human rights violations committed during the 1996-2006 conflict remained grossly inadequate. The authorities failed to carry out credible and independent investigations into deaths in custody.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY

The authorities continued to intimidate, arrest and prosecute individuals exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

In August, police in the capital, Kathmandu, arrested comedian Apoorwa Kshitiz Singh after complaints were filed against a video he posted online. He was indicted under the Penal Code on four different charges, potentially leading to a prison sentence of up to five years. In October, the Kathmandu District Court released him on bail.

In October, the Election Commission threatened to seek prosecution of the operators of a social media group “No Not Again”, demanding that they shut down the group and delete posts criticizing politicians. In November, the Supreme Court ordered the Commission to refrain from taking any action against the campaigners and respect their right to freedom of expression. Also in November, the Commission demanded that an online portal – Setopati.com – remove a news story about an electoral candidate. The Commission later retracted the demand after widespread criticism.