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carried out by the administration. For the whole of 2024, the minimum pension benefit failed to cover the cost of living, impacting people's right to an adequate standard of living. Despite the decision by Congress to increase the value of pensions, the president vetoed the change, undermining the economic and social rights of older people.

The average person living in Argentina suffered economic austerity, while the fiscal system favoured a regressive tax system that exacerbated inequality. The government justified austerity and budget cuts as necessary to achieve fiscal balance, while reducing progressive taxes and increasing tax exemptions for large companies.

RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Concerns remained over the government's position on climate change. The president declared that "global warming is a lie from socialism" and announced that he was unsubscribing Argentina from the Agenda 2030 commitments, which include targets to limit climate change. The Climate Action Tracker rated Argentina's climate targets and policies as "critically insufficient", meaning that they were not at all consistent with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit for the average global temperature rise.

The government also introduced regressive legislation authorizing deforestation in currently protected areas and expanding the authorization of mining activities in the periglacial zone. The reforms had not been passed by the end of the year.

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1. "Argentina: Ongoing criminalization against LGBT+ activist", 30 May ¹
 2. "Muted: The impact of digital violence against women journalists", 15 October (Spanish only) ¹
 3. "Escalation of attacks on freedom of expression in Argentina: Amnesty International's letter to the IACHR", 23 July (Spanish only) ¹

ARMENIA

Republic of Armenia

The government struggled to integrate more than 100,000 refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh. Freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly were curtailed on several occasions and journalists and environmental defenders were threatened and harassed. Amendments to the domestic violence law provided increased protection to survivors. Discrimination against LGBTI people persisted.

BACKGROUND

Negotiations towards finalizing a peace deal with Azerbaijan continued amidst a tense security situation, marked by clashes around Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region and along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border. Tensions also remained high over key issues such as territorial corridors and the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The government continued to strengthen political ties with the EU and USA, while announcing plans to leave the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization.

The post-conflict tensions with Azerbaijan continued to fuel domestic political unrest. In April and May, large-scale protests erupted after a border demarcation agreement with Azerbaijan left four villages in the Tavush region on the Azerbaijani side of the border. Protesters blocked roads, calling on Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to resign and criticizing his handling of the 2022 conflict with Azerbaijan and his government's shift in political alliances.

REFUGEES' AND MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

The government continued to face difficulties in integrating more than 100,000 refugees who fled Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijan took control in September 2023. Housing, employment and education remained particularly difficult for many refugees. Their right to a safe and dignified return remained unfulfilled.

FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

The police used unlawful force against demonstrators on several occasions during the protests in April and May calling on the prime minister to resign.

On 12 June, police and demonstrators clashed in the centre of the capital, Yerevan, during protests against the border demarcation agreement. Some 101 individuals were injured, including 17 police officers, and 98 people were reportedly detained. At least 15 individuals were later charged with hooliganism and violating public order. No law enforcement officers were indicted or charged following an inquiry into the proportionality and legality of the police response.¹

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The protests in April and May were accompanied by reports of increased pressure and harassment against journalists, including insults and threats. The Armenian Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression reported that 14 journalists and media workers were injured while covering the protests, due to targeted attacks as well as the crush of the crowd. Some journalists were shoved and pushed to the ground, while others reported being beaten and injured by police officers.

On 22 March, authorities detained podcast hosts and political opposition activists Vazgen Sagatelyan and Narek Samsonyan on charges of hooliganism and remanded them in custody for two months. The two men were accused of using obscene language against the Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan and other figures from the ruling party on the media outlet AntiFake. Their trial began on 23 September. If convicted, they could face up to five years' imprisonment.

RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

The Amulsar gold mine was given permission to resume operations in January without fully addressing the environmental concerns around water and land pollution, which had led to protests in previous years. Environmental defenders faced lawsuits intended to silence them and were targeted

by media smear campaigns. These included allegations that their activism threatened national security. The attacks followed their December 2023 joint statement raising concerns about the environmental impacts of the controversial Amulsar mining project.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

On 12 April, parliament adopted amendments to the domestic violence law, strengthening protections for survivors and removing the previous emphasis on “restoring family harmony”, which could potentially put pressure on victims to stay in abusive relationships. The amendments expanded the definition of domestic violence to include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. The amendments also introduced new offences including forced medical interventions, restricting access to healthcare, “virginity testing” and stalking.

LGBTI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Stigmatization and discrimination against LGBTI people continued. In June, staff in the office of the Ombudsperson reported being subjected to threats, harassment and verbal abuse, particularly for their work with LGBTI individuals.

1. “Armenia: Violence during street protests must be investigated”, 13 June 1

AUSTRALIA

Australia

Discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples remained entrenched. Children as young as 10 years of age were imprisoned. New migration laws increased risks of indefinite detention or refoulement, and other human rights abuses in detention. Anti-protest laws were used to restrict the right to peaceful assembly. New fossil fuel projects were approved, perpetuating Australia's status as a leading fossil fuel producer.