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## ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

### News from the Section on Archives and Human Rights

*Winner of the Premio Internacional Derechos Humanos 2020 de la Asociación pro Derechos Humanos de España*

**Issue no. 135, February 2021**

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**Commentary.** The *SAHR News* commentary in January 2020 described a number of archives and archivists around the world that seemed to be at serious risk of harm, among them in Lebanon, Chile and Guatemala. It is time to look again at these and other situations.

An article in a February 2021 issue of *The Economist* was headlined “Global democracy has a very bad year” with a subhead “The pandemic caused an unprecedented rollback of democratic freedoms in 2020.” The accompanying map shows great swaths of orange and red, designating countries with authoritarian regimes. <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2021/02/02/global-democracy-has-a-very-bad-year> Also in February, Human Rights Watch (HRW) “reviewed national government responses around the world to the Covid-19 pandemic and found that unlawful interference with free speech has been one of the most common forms of overreach,” with at least 83 government using the pandemic to “justify violating the exercise of free speech and peaceful assembly.” Journalists, peaceful protesters, opposition activists and lawyers were physically assaulted by “security forces or state officials in a least 18 countries.” And “at least eight governments temporarily suspended or restricted the right to request and receive public health information, or limited press accreditation for Covid-19-related press briefings to pro-state media outlets,” citing Turkey, El Salvador and Bangladesh as among these abusers. HRW’s finding is “based on its own research, as well as outside sources including the Covid-19 Civic Freedom Tracker of the International Center for Not-For-Profit law and European Center for Not-For-Profit Law, reports by other nongovernmental organizations and the United Nations, and international and local media.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/11/covid-19-triggers-wave-free-speech-abuse>

So how is this rollback affecting archives and archivists? Readers of the January 2021 issue of *SAHR News* know the incredibly sad story of the assassination of Lokman Slim, the co-founder of the UMAM Documentation and Research center in Beirut, Lebanon, which has important holdings on the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). In Chile, University of Chile archivist Alejandra Araya was the subject of a criminal complaint against her which was dismissed, due to lack of evidence, on 24 November 2020.<sup>1</sup> In Guatemala, the case against the former national archivist, Anna Carla Ericastilla, drags on with no end in sight. In a war-torn African country, an archivist no longer responds to email messages, raising concerns. One bright spot was the protective order issued for the Guatemala police archives (see item below).

As democratic systems crumble or evolve toward an authoritarian system, worry rises about risks to entities such as Sri Lanka’s Office of Missing Persons, which holds documentation on the civil war, and civil society organizations in Myanmar whose existence is under threat. In Nicaragua, a law passed in December “requires people and organizations receiving funds from outside Nicaragua to register as ‘foreign agents’ with the Interior Ministry and provide detailed reports of their income and expenditures to the government or face hefty fines, jail time and seizure of their property,” *AP* reported. Both PEN-Nicaragua and the press freedom organization Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation said they were closing rather than comply. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4121526> What will happen to all these records?

Backsliding occurs; it is not easy to build or to maintain a democratic system. In 1867 the wise Tunisian reformer Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, viewing European politics, wrote that sometimes a dictator “would be

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accepted by the people for the purpose of extinguishing [national] helplessness, delivering the kingdom from danger, and making her conditions viable by smoothing out the people's rough spots and straightening their crookedness. However, the people usually do not get what they hoped for." (Quoted in Leon Carl Brown, *The Surest Path: The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth Century Muslim Statesman*, Harvard University Press, 1967, p. 177.)

Straightening crookedness is hard. Documenting it is even harder and more dangerous. As we watch the worldwide evolution of state systems, we must hope that documentation of regimes—so necessary for diagnosing the state—however difficult, will prevail.

**HRWG News.** The Open Access version of *Archives and Human Rights* can be downloaded at <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/archives-human-rights-jens-boel-perrine-canavaggio-antonio-gonz%C3%A1lez-quintana/e/10.4324/9780429054624>

SAHR Chairperson Antonio González Quintana gave a keynote address at a meeting of ICA's Section of University Archives. He discussed the existing documentation of human rights abuses during the Belgian colonial period in the Congo. <https://live.eventtia.com/es/memoria-y-archivos>

### **International news.**

**Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.** For the first time, the Commission ruled that criminalizing gay and lesbian people violates international law, *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. The case centered on two Jamaicans who were attacked "by homophobic gangs." An 1864 Jamaican law banned the "abominable crime of buggery" and "gross indecency," which the plaintiffs said legitimized violence against LGBT+ people. Strangely, the decision "was made in September 2019 but remained strictly confidential under its orders" until 17 February 2021. <https://news.trust.org/item/20210217182107-qmsmp/>

The Commission announced that it instructed its Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression to convene a working group on freedom of expression on the internet. The group is to "formulate recommendations for improving conditions for democratic debate, identify experiences in digital literacy for the development of civic skills, and help make Internet content moderation compatible with human rights standards." [http://www.oas.org/en/IACHR/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media\\_center/PReleases/2021/026.asp](http://www.oas.org/en/IACHR/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2021/026.asp)

**International Criminal Court (ICC).** The Court convicted Dominic Ongwen, a former commander of the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) on 61 of 70 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The presiding judge said this "is the first time a trial chamber of the ICC has convicted anyone of the crime of forced pregnancy," *International Justice Monitor* reported. During the trial, the prosecution called 69 witnesses and provided "written evidence from another 40 witnesses;" seven more women testified during the pre-trial phase about sexual and gender-based crimes. The defense called 54 witnesses and the representative of the victims called seven. The leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, who has been charged by the Court, remains at large. If he is apprehended, the evidence from the Ongwen case will be available for his trial. <https://www.ijmonitor.org/2021/02/icc-convicts-ongwen-of-61-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity/>; <https://news.trust.org/item/20210204091349-39ym9/>

In December 2019 the Prosecutor asked the Court to determine whether it has jurisdiction over the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. In February, the Court said it "finds that Palestine is a State Party to the Statute" of the ICC, and the majority of judges found "that the Court's territorial jurisdiction in the *Situation in Palestine* extends to the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, namely Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem." For background, see *SAHR News* 2019-12. [https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2021\\_01165.PDF](https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2021_01165.PDF)

The Prosecutor said "she would make a decision regarding the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus before her term ends on June 16," the *Jerusalem Post* reported. "The issue is a rare case that deals with alleged forced population transfer as a war crime (as opposed to 'classic' war crimes such as genocide), and the ICC's decision could have far-reaching implications in how it could treat Israeli settlements." [https://search.aol.com/click/?ylt=AwrE19emIT1gPkQAEoHpCWVH:ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzQEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1614647847/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwww.jpost.com%2fmiddle-east%2ficc-prosecutor-to-decide-cyprus-file-before-exit-659356/RK=0/RS=1uegDVV19EAfo\\_PyvKsDE4GX0EU-](https://search.aol.com/click/?ylt=AwrE19emIT1gPkQAEoHpCWVH:ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzQEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1614647847/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwww.jpost.com%2fmiddle-east%2ficc-prosecutor-to-decide-cyprus-file-before-exit-659356/RK=0/RS=1uegDVV19EAfo_PyvKsDE4GX0EU-)

Kosovo Specialist Chambers. The leader and deputy leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army War Veterans' Organization, Hysni Gucati and Nasim Haradinaj, are "charged with obstructing justice and intimidating witnesses after batches of confidential case files from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers . . . were leaked to them, and both men urged media in Kosovo to publish the material," *BIRN* reported. Now the defense lawyers have accused the prosecution of "not properly categorising evidence material and not providing a proper witness list," saying the defense "received 3,000 pages of material since January 4 . . . not categorized" along with 100 hours of video footage. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-12. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/02/24/defence-prosecution-tussle-in-kosovo-war-veterans-leaders-case/>

United Nations. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) published its fifth Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. Warning that the economic crisis caused by the pandemic has made "millions of people more at risk of human trafficking," its data show that 50% are trafficked for sexual exploitation, 38% for forced labor, 6% for forced criminal activity and other economic sectors, *Geneva Solutions* reported. "Globally 64% of convicted traffickers are male" and UNODC "recorded 534 different trafficking flows around the globe although victims are typically trafficked within geographically close areas." The UNODC executive director told a press conference, "One of every three detected victims of trafficking in the world is a child," adding, "We must be unwavering in delivering a unified message to traffickers. Exploitation is not a business model and our children are not commodities." [https://genevasolutions.news/geneva-solutions/more-and-more-children-victims-of-human-trafficking-warns-new-un-report-covid-19-increases-risks?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email](https://genevasolutions.news/geneva-solutions/more-and-more-children-victims-of-human-trafficking-warns-new-un-report-covid-19-increases-risks?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email)

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) issued *The State of Open Humanitarian Data*. OCHA's Humanitarian Data exchange (HDX) platform has grown from 800 datasets when it was launched in 2014 to 18,200 datasets, with 1.3 million people using the platform in 2020 and downloading over 2.2 million datasets. It also has sub-groups of datasets called Data Grids for 27 locations that "bring together a limited set . . . needed to understand a humanitarian context." Sadly, "at the start of 2021, we estimate that just 51% of relevant, complete crisis data is available across 27 humanitarian operations. If we add the data that is relevant but incomplete, the total is 75%." And, importantly, "the COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented demand for data in the humanitarian sector, but persistent data gaps remain." <https://centre.humdata.org/stateofdata2021>

World Health Organization. A team of 14 medical experts visited Wuhan, China, to investigate the source of the COVID-19 virus. At a news conference at the end of the visit, the researchers said more research needs to be done, with one team member saying "she did not get to see raw data and had to rely on an analysis of the data that was presented to her. But she said that would be true in most countries," *AP* reported. Subsequently the *New York Times* wrote that the team asked their Chinese counterparts "to examine records for patients who had been hospitalized with symptoms . . . as early as October 2019" and the Chinese scientists reviewed "76,000 records at 233 medical institutions in Wuhan." It characterized the team as "frustrated" by their limited access to data, but China's *CGTN* quoted several of the team members saying they had been misquoted by the *Times* and one member first tweeting, "We DID get access to critical new data throughout," and then adding "Shame on you @nytimes." [https://apnews.com/article/who-coronavirus-experts-learned-in-wuhan-86549d1189f3d174273a26e39d177d05?utm\\_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=28cd4b1e62-MR\\_COPY\\_14&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_8cab1d7961-28cd4b1e62-149736437](https://apnews.com/article/who-coronavirus-experts-learned-in-wuhan-86549d1189f3d174273a26e39d177d05?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=28cd4b1e62-MR_COPY_14&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-28cd4b1e62-149736437); [https://search.aol.com/click/?ylt=A0geKJAmlD5gyjwAcQRpCWVH: ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEecG9zAzEEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1614742695/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwww.nytimes.com%2f2021%2f02%2f12%2fworld%2fasia%2fchina-world-health-organization-coronavirus.html/RK=0/RS=zliWSGfc\\_hMOPL25wpGX.OS0.k-](https://search.aol.com/click/?ylt=A0geKJAmlD5gyjwAcQRpCWVH: ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEecG9zAzEEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1614742695/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwww.nytimes.com%2f2021%2f02%2f12%2fworld%2fasia%2fchina-world-health-organization-coronavirus.html/RK=0/RS=zliWSGfc_hMOPL25wpGX.OS0.k-) ; <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-02-14/WHO-experts-slam-NYT-report-on-China-trip--XRJ5iXk0H6/index.html>

WHO's Director-General urged Tanzania to start reporting coronavirus cases and share its data, *BBC News* reported. Tanzania has not published data on Covid-19 cases since May 2020. The D-G pointed out that the data is necessary for the country both to "safeguard their own people and protect populations in these countries and beyond." <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56145510>

### World/general news.

Business records. "Newly unsealed court documents and other records show that Merck & Co. and U.S. regulators knew about reports of suicidal behavior in men taking the company's anti-baldness treatment

Propecia when they decided not to warn consumers of those potential risks in a 2011 update of the popular drug's label," *Reuters* reported. "Internal records from Merck were made public in January, when a federal magistrate in Brooklyn, New York, granted a 2019 *Reuters* motion to unseal 11 documents filed in years of litigation." [https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN2A32XU?utm\\_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=720b235bf1-MR\\_COPY\\_14&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_8cab1d7961-720b235bf1-149736437](https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN2A32XU?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=720b235bf1-MR_COPY_14&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-720b235bf1-149736437)

"Brazilian mining giant Vale signed an agreement to pay \$7 billion in compensation to the state of Minas Gerais, two years after the collapse of one of its dams killed 270 people, also causing vast environmental damage," the *New York Times* reported. "In 2020, prosecutors investigating the case found evidence that safety reports had been fabricated for at least 10 of Vale's dams." For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-01. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/world/americas/vale-brazil-dam-collapse-7-bi>

Eight former child laborers who say they were forced to work without pay on cocoa plantations in Ivory Coast sued seven major chocolate companies—Nestle, Cargill, Barry Callebaut, Mars, Olam, Hershey and Mondelez—for "aiding and abetting" their enslavement, the *Guardian* reported. "A central allegation of the lawsuit is that the defendant, despite not owning the cocoa farms in question, 'knowingly profited' from the illegal work of children. According to the submissions, the defendants' contracted suppliers were able to provide lower prices than if they had employed adult workers with proper protective equipment." The suit is brought in the United States under the 2017 Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-12. Thanks to Giulia Barrera for the link. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/12/mars-nestle-and-hershey-to-face-landmark-child-slavery-lawsuit-in-us?>

The Japanese-owned Furukawa Plantaciones C.A. company, which operates about 30 abaca tree plantations in Ecuador, was sued by 123 ex-laborers alleging they were victims of modern-day slavery. In January the judge "in an oral ruling . . . said that the workers had suffered racial discrimination and were victims of servitude . . . opening the way to compensation," *Thomson Reuters Foundation* quoted the plaintiffs' lawyer as saying. Furukawa was ordered to compensate the laborers, and the company and "several government ministries" must "issue an apology in local media and on their websites, listing all 123 workers by name." Ecuador's government ombudsman called the decision "a historic milestone. Both the state of Ecuador and the company are responsible." The case is being appealed by Ecuador's labor ministry. It is the first case to recognize slavery in agriculture in Ecuador; the written decision is still to be issued. <https://www.newsamericasnow.com/latin-america-modern-day-slavery-ecuador/>

The U.K. Supreme Court ruled that people of the oil-polluted Bille community and the Ogoni people of Ogoniland of Nigeria's Niger Delta can sue Royal Dutch Shell in English courts, *BBC News* reported. Lawyers for the communities say "Shell's records reveal" that there "have been at least 40 oil spills from Shell's pipelines since 1989." The company "did not dispute that pollution had been caused, but argued it could not be held legally responsible for its Nigerian subsidiary." For background, see *HRWG News* 2019-05, 07. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56041189>

A judge at South Africa's Western Cape High Court ruled "that the slew of defamation lawsuits filed by Mineral Commodities Limited (MRC) and its local subsidiary" against six South African environmental justice and community activists is "an abuse of the legal process," *Cape Argus* reported. Called SLAPP suits (Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation), they are a tool used against activists, in this case "for criticizing the environmental impacts and legal compliance of [MRC] Tormin mineral sands mine." The company will "appeal against the court's introduction of the Slapp defence into our law." For background, see *HRWG News* 2019-09. <https://cer.org.za/news/a-momentous-legal-victory-for-environmental-activism-and-free-speech>; <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/australian-mining-firm-intends-to-appeal-judgment-that-favoured-activists-daf4be4f-9382-4a98-bf32-16786cf1cbca>

*Motherboard* obtained internal documents from the McDonald's fast food restaurant chain that reveal the corporation "has monitored its own workers' activities" with the U.S. movement for a \$15 minimum wage. "A team of intelligence analysts in the Chicago and London offices keep an eye on the activities of Fight for \$15 labor organizers across the world, figure out which McDonald's workers are active in the movement, and who they are working with to organize strikes, protests, or attempt to form unions." One of the documents "contains a series of bullet points where the company's intelligence analysts recap labor activists' activities, down to the number of in-person and 'virtual' protests."

[https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkdkz9/mcdonalds-secretive-intel-team-spies-on-fight-for-15-workers?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=editorial&utm\\_content=news&utm\\_campaign=210224](https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkdkz9/mcdonalds-secretive-intel-team-spies-on-fight-for-15-workers?utm_source=email&utm_medium=editorial&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=210224)

Lloyd's of London, the giant insurance company, announced "it was seeking an archivist who would examine its collection of artefacts for historical links to . . . slavery," historian Katie Donington wrote in an opinion piece for *Thomson Reuters Foundation*. The archivist is to "develop narratives" about the artifacts, "manage displays in Lloyd's buildings and advise on making the collection more accessible." Donington argued that while hiring an archivist is a step in the right direction, "Questions remain as to what access will be allowed for those who want to examine the actual contents of the archives and not just its catalogue." <https://news.trust.org/item/20210224150241-gh1b4/>

Theranos was a company that developed and promoted a blood-testing product, which proved to be "so inaccurate, it was essentially a coin toss whether the patient was getting the right result," *CNBC* reported. The company closed in 2018, and the former owner is now sued by the U.S. government for criminal wire fraud charges in connection with deceiving investors, patients and doctors about its technology. Prosecutors allege company executives "destroyed a database which contained three-years-worth of accuracy and failure rates" after the database was subpoenaed in August 2018. Internal emails show Theranos attempted to cover-up the test results in the database, prosecutors said, and then "provided backup copies of the database for investigators to piece together. However, prosecutors allege the backup required a password that Theranos executives couldn't remember." Attorneys for the former owner said "the reason the government lacks this evidence is because the prosecutors sat on their hands for years before attempting to acquire it, and then sat on their hands again after acquiring it." <https://www.cbc.com/2021/02/24/elizabeth-holmes-denies-destroying-evidence-in-theranos-case.html>

McKinsey & Company, the global management consulting firm, agreed to pay \$573 million dollars to settle charges that it helped devise strategies to boost the sales of opioids that resulted in mass addictions. The agreement is unusual because it holds the company responsible for advice that resulted in actions, not the actions themselves. The *New York Times* reported that as part of the settlement "McKinsey will also retain emails for five years" and "will put tens of thousands of pages of documents related to its opioid work onto a publicly available database." For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-12. <https://www.bizjournals.com/austin/news/2021/02/04/mckinsey-settles-for-573m-over-role-in-opioid-cri.html>

In 2017 Peruvian farmer Saul Luciano Lliuya sued RWE, Germany's biggest electricity producer, in the German regional court in Hamm, arguing that greenhouse gas emissions from RWE plants are partly to blame for the melting of a glacier in the Peruvian Andes which is producing water that threatens to flood his home, *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. A new study published in *Nature Geoscience* said the glacier has halved in length and the temperature in the region has risen by 1 degree Celsius since 1880. The lead author said, "We found that human influence on climate, through greenhouse gas emissions, is responsible for virtually all of the warming that has been observed in the region." The study is being presented to the court as evidence. <https://news.trust.org/item/20210204152011-kkska/>

Climate change. Using the results of 1904 and 1940 field surveys of wildlife (birds and small mammals) in California's Mojave Desert, a research project by the University of California, Berkeley, documented the impact of climate change on animal life. The records of the original surveys are held in the archives of the University's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, and the researchers had access to "100,000 specimens and . . . 74,000 pages of cursive field notes, with more than 10,000 images, from more than 700 sites across the state," *WIRED* reported. Comparing old and new data, they found "a stunning community collapse" among birds but not among the small mammals in the desert. The latter can shelter underground during the heat of the day, the researchers explained, but the birds, dependent on water to cool themselves, were dramatically affected by the 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit increase and the 20% decline in rainfall over the past century.

[https://www.wired.com/story/what-a-1900s-wildlife-survey-reveals-about-climate-change/?bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&cid=53684912&cid=53684912&esrc=sign-up-page&esrc=sign-up-page&hasha=8fcd7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hasha=8fcd7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&source=EDT\\_WIR\\_NEWSLETTER\\_0\\_DAILY\\_ZZ&source=EDT\\_WIR\\_NEWSLETTER\\_0\\_DAILY\\_ZZ&utm\\_brand=wired&utm\\_brand=wired&utm\\_campaign=aud-dev&utm\\_campaign=aud-](https://www.wired.com/story/what-a-1900s-wildlife-survey-reveals-about-climate-change/?bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&cid=53684912&cid=53684912&esrc=sign-up-page&esrc=sign-up-page&hasha=8fcd7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hasha=8fcd7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&source=EDT_WIR_NEWSLETTER_0_DAILY_ZZ&source=EDT_WIR_NEWSLETTER_0_DAILY_ZZ&utm_brand=wired&utm_brand=wired&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_campaign=aud-)

High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA), an “agribusiness industry sustainability body” confirmed allegations that Golden Veroleum Liberia, the Liberian subsidiary of “palm oil giant” Golden Agri-Resources, “committed widespread deforestation over a thousand hectares of forest, including endangered species habitat and important wetlands” in Liberia. HCSA also said the company “violated the land and cultural rights of local communities, including the right to free prior and informed consent and social requirements on basic needs and grievance and remedy.” The report contains an informative section on the sources used, including the data limitations encountered. <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/front-slider/independent-complaints-panel-finds-golden-veroleum-liable-of-destroying-liberias-forests/>; [http://highcarbonstock.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/HCSA\\_GM\\_2018\\_01\\_GVL\\_GAR-Grievance-Case-Final-Report-HCSA-Website.pdf](http://highcarbonstock.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/HCSA_GM_2018_01_GVL_GAR-Grievance-Case-Final-Report-HCSA-Website.pdf)

Enforced disappearance. *The Intercept* reported on a complaint presented to the UN Human Rights Committee by the NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] Global Legal Action Network and Human Rights 360 arguing that migrant pushbacks are cases of enforced disappearance. The case used as an example is a Syrian refugee who was given legal asylum in Germany, with a German ID card, passport and papers. When he went to Greece to search for his missing 11-year-old brother, he was arrested by police, who took his “cellphone, passport, keys and all of his other personal effects,” and deported him to Turkey, apparently without recording his name. He was “stuck in legal limbo” in Turkey for three years; after 14 attempts he made it back to Greece and the German consulate in Athens. As one of his attorneys explained, the “‘black ops and clandestine nature of the violations,’ lack of paper trail, and concealment of facts, as well as the denial of justice and the breakdown in the rule of law, cumulated into an enforced disappearance.” Other legal experts told *The Intercept* that the U.S. separation of children from their families at the U.S.-Mexico border and the U.S. failure to create sufficient records to enable the reunion of the families also “meets all the elements of enforced disappearances.” [https://theintercept.com/2021/02/28/enforced-disappearances-asylum-migrant-abuse/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter](https://theintercept.com/2021/02/28/enforced-disappearances-asylum-migrant-abuse/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter)

Environment. A group of U.S. and U.K. university researchers found that “more than 8 million people died in 2018 from fossil fuel pollution,” Harvard University reported. “The researchers used emission [from burning fossil fuels] and meteorology data primarily from 2012 because it was a year not influenced by El Nino [the weather phenomenon in the Pacific Ocean], which can worsen or ameliorate air pollution” which they then updated to 2018. Using a “global 3-D model of atmospheric chemistry,” they plugged into it “estimates of emissions from multiple sectors, including power, industry, ships, aircraft and ground transportation.” When they had the “concentration of outdoor fossil-fuel” particulates in the air, they linked it to rates of mortality and found that “exposure to particulate matter from fossil fuel emissions accounted for 18% of total global deaths in 2018—a little less than 1 out of 5.” <https://www.seas.harvard.edu/news/2021/02/deaths-fossil-fuel-emissions-higher-previously-thought>

Human rights defenders/aid workers. “At least 331 human rights defenders promoting social, environmental, racial and gender justice in 25 countries were murdered in 2020, with scores more beaten, detained and criminalized because of their work,” reported the NGO Front Line Defenders (FLD). Latin America was the most dangerous continent, with Colombia recording 177 deaths, more than half the global total. Each year FLD “records hundreds of violations . . . through its public and private advocacy and its grants programme.” Although it recorded 919 violations in 2020, FLD recognizes that because in pandemic year 2020 “field staff was largely unable to travel, it can be assumed that there is much information missing . . . in rural, less well-connected areas.” <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/11/human-rights-defenders-murder-2020-report>; for the report: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/resource-publication/global-analysis-2020>

Hunger. *The New Humanitarian* published an essay on the way “famine” is determined by the international community in five “phases,” from 1 for “no or minimal food insecurity” to 5 famine. “To designate a famine, specific thresholds of hunger, malnutrition, and mortality must be surpassed.” However, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system “frequently doesn’t have information about deaths in real time, and doesn’t assess cumulative mortality.” In places that are in conflict, such as South Sudan and Yemen, “mortality numbers are often missing because authorities have not permitted country-wide data collection.” The writer concluded that “it’s a dangerous misconception to believe

people aren't dying from hunger and malnutrition-related causes until an actual famine is occurring.”  
<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2021/2/3/yemen-famine-aid-hunger-crises-south-sudan-malnutrition>

International adoption. The Netherlands government “suspended adoptions from foreign countries . . . after an investigative committee report” showed abuses, *AP* reported, including “the falsification of documents, the abuse of poverty among the birth mothers and the abandonment of children for payment or through coercion.” The report explained that intentionally providing incorrect information obstructed the process of tracking down the origin and identity of adoptees: “inadequate archiving, carelessness in documenting data and a lack of transparency in documentation.” The investigators used archives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Justice Ministry and the Prosecution office and data from, among others, the Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) and Wereldkinderen, a platform for transnational adoption. The Minister for Legal Protection announced that “a national expertise center will be established to support adopted people in seeking their birth families.” Special thanks to Ruben Zeeman for translations from the report. <https://apnews.com/article/adoption-netherlands-europe-6961b52bd738d706cc89b5f18f2ba58b>

Medical records. Researchers reported in *Psychological Medicine* on an “extensive review of 14,785 murders publicly described in English in print or online, occurring worldwide between 1900 and 2019” and “analyzed 1,315 mass murders.” Contrary to popular belief, they found that “serious mental illness was present in only 11% of all mass murderers and in only 8% of mass shooters” (those that killed with a firearm). Since 1970 “the rate of mass shootings has been far greater than the rate of non-firearm mass murder, with the vast majority of mass shootings occurring in the United States.”  
[https://www.eurasiareview.com/21022021-first-report-on-mass-shootings-from-columbia-university-database/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](https://www.eurasiareview.com/21022021-first-report-on-mass-shootings-from-columbia-university-database/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

The *Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC)* carried a story about the emotional impact of receiving a paper COVID-19 vaccination card, quoting a woman in British Columbia who said, “Holding that card is like holding hope.” *CBC* wrote, “Not everybody has ready access to a doctor who can access their online records or a stable internet connection to do it themselves. Some people simply prefer keeping track of their information at home. Plus, hard copies prevail when online databases crash.”  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/covid-19-vaccine-records-proof-of-vaccine-paper-copy-bc-1.5894473>

Researchers used data from the Mass General Brigham system, a large integrated hospital and health care network based in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S., to investigate “whether home addresses recorded in the electronic medical record could be used to accurately estimate [COVID-19] transmission risk and identify risk factors for transmission.” They used 7,262 cases of persons who had a COVID-19 diagnosis between 4 March and 17 May 2020; those persons had the same address as another 17,917 individuals. They found that 10.1% of the co-residents subsequently got the virus. The researchers believe that using this approach “may provide a more efficient method for risk estimation and household contact identification” than doing traditional, intensive contact tracing.  
[https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2776908?utm\\_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=ca7687d6c5-MR\\_COPY\\_14&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_8cab1d7961-ca7687d6c5-149736437](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2776908?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=ca7687d6c5-MR_COPY_14&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-ca7687d6c5-149736437)

Citing yet another case of a donor whose sperm was used dozens if not hundreds of times, the *New York Times* reported on the “poorly regulated” in vitro fertilization “industry.” While some countries, such as the Netherlands, are establishing central registries for sperm donors “to prevent men from donating at several clinics at the same time,” there is no international regulation. An NGO, Moms on a Mission, all of whose 50 plus members had children by a single donor, advocates the creation of an international database of donors. They argue that control is necessary because “the more half siblings there are in the population who are unknown to one another, the greater the odds that two of them might meet unwittingly and produce children of their own—children with a heightened risk of carrying hereditary defects.” For a similar story, see *SAHR News* 2020-09. <https://bakhele.com/the-case-of-the-serial-sperm-donor/>

Migration. The NGO Last Rights Project commissioned four researchers to take “snapshots” of migrants “suffering the full range of negative consequences” of COVID-19 and the measures countries have imposed. The project focused on “death, preservation of information, its recording and attribution and the consequences for bereaved migrant families.” The four researchers were given a “comprehensive

questionnaire” to use with interviewees as they covered four regions: South Africa-Zimbabwe, Greece-Germany, Mexico-U.S., France-Italy-Tunisia-Morocco-Spain. The result was “a consistent narrative of draconian lockdowns, exclusion from health care, increased risks of infection and death, deprivations over and beyond usual levels of treatment.” More than 100 recommendations are included. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f3QRFCcQmeI5AmhAug38JVTRmfccQyHA/view>

Two NGOs, No More Deaths and La Coalición de Derechos Humanos, issued an important report on the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and the migration crisis at the U.S.-Mexican border. Noting that CBP said that between 1998 and 2019 it recovered the remains of 7,805 persons, the NGOs estimate “three to ten times as many people may have died or disappeared.” The primary source for the estimate is the “456 emergency cases received from 2015-2016” by the Coalition’s “Missing Migrant Crisis Line.” In addition, the researchers used 2,193 audio recordings of 911 calls received between 2016-2018 by the Pima, Arizona, County Sheriff’s Department that were transferred to CBP, 224 audio recordings of emergency search and rescue calls handled by the Sheriff’s department (both sets of audio obtained through public records requests), interviews, and CBP press statements. They term CBP’s response to emergencies “deadly” and say the agency is obstructing “humanitarian and family search efforts in the south west desert.” [http://www.thedisappearedreport.org/uploads/8/3/5/1/83515082/left\\_to\\_die\\_-\\_english.pdf](http://www.thedisappearedreport.org/uploads/8/3/5/1/83515082/left_to_die_-_english.pdf)

The steering committee of lawyers and advocates working to reunify families separated at the U.S.-Mexico border said it found the parents of 105 children in the last month, but the parents of 506 children still have not been located and the parents of “about” 322 of the children are believed to have been deported, *NBC News* reported. On March 1 the U.S. announced that it will permit the children’s parents to enter the U.S. for reunification and families will be given the option of reuniting in their country of origin or in the United States. The U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security said, “If they seek to reunite here in the United States, we will explore lawful pathways for them to remain in the United States and to address the family needs.” <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/lawyers-have-found-parents-105-separated-migrant-children-past-month-n1258791>; [https://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/US/2021/03/01/Alejandro-Mayorkas-migrant-families-reunite-US-Mexico/6661614628621/](https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2021/03/01/Alejandro-Mayorkas-migrant-families-reunite-US-Mexico/6661614628621/)

Sex abuse. *VICE* reported on the sexual harassment, assault, intimidation and threats suffered by women working on commercial fishing boats as fisheries monitors. It obtained “internal emails” of Archipelago Marine Research, a private company that supplies monitors to Canadian vessels, which “repeatedly warned current employees not to speak to the media.” “Some observers felt they were being intimidated by skippers into misreporting data, with huge consequences for the environment.” [https://www.vice.com/en/article/jgqng/trapped-women-working-as-fishery-observers-allege-sex-harassment-assault-at-sea?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=editorial&utm\\_content=news&utm\\_campaign=210209](https://www.vice.com/en/article/jgqng/trapped-women-working-as-fishery-observers-allege-sex-harassment-assault-at-sea?utm_source=email&utm_medium=editorial&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=210209)

World War II. A Polish judge ruled that two Holocaust historians must issue a public apology for including “inaccurate information” in their study that discussed the role played by individual Poles in the murder of Jews during World War II, reported *AP*. The suit was brought by a woman who claimed her deceased uncle had been libelled in the work. “At the center of the case was testimony given in 1996 by a Jewish woman . . . to the USC Shoah Foundation, a Los Angeles-based group that collects Holocaust-era oral histories” that described the uncle’s behavior. The historians “view the case as an attempt to discredit their overall findings and discourage other researchers from investigating the truth about Polish involvement in the German mass murder of Jews.” <https://apnews.com/article/poland-europe-warsaw-13f643d34b511cce0f2bcf2f933d4698>

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that despite the evidence of the theft of property from victims of the Holocaust, the descendants of the former owners of the Guelph Treasure (Welfenschatz) cannot sue the German government, which now holds the art, in a U.S. court. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/supreme-court-rules-unanimously-for-germany-in-nazi-art-sale-case/ar-BB1dmIII>

A New York auction house offered for sale a bound memorial register of Jewish burials in Cluj, Romania, between 1836 and 1899 and a similar register of births and deaths of Jews from nearby Oradea. In 1944, reported the *New York Times*, nearly all Jews in Cluj perished and “Jewish homes, offices, archives and synagogues in Cluj were ransacked and possessions were looted, including books and historical records, leaving behind scant trace of a once-vibrant, mainly Hungarian-speaking community.” After Jewish groups protested the sale, the auction house withdrew the listing and “the seller has agreed to discuss the

matter further” with the World Jewish Restitution Organization. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/arts/auction-house-suspends-sale-jewish-burial-records.html>

Germany charged two people for their roles in Nazi war crimes, the *New York Times* reported. The woman, 94 years old, had worked as a secretary at the Stutthof concentration camp; a man, 100 years old, was a guard at the Sachsenhausen camp. According to the prosecutor who leads the German government office investigating Nazi-era crimes, the work of the office has created “an indispensable archive, that otherwise might not exist, a record of much of the country’s legal history, of World War II-era criminals and of how they have been processed.” <https://citybuzznews.com/2021/02/why-germany-prosecutes-the-aged-for-nazi-roles-it-long-ignored/>

The U.S. deported Friedrich Karl Berger, a 95-year-old former guard at the Neuengamme concentration camp, to Germany, the *Washington Post* reported. In May 1945 British warplanes bombed two ships at anchor in the Baltic Sea’s Bay of Lubeck. “Justice Department historians were able to document Berger’s service at the camp in part with information from an index card found in one of the sunken ships several years after the bombing. The card summarized Berger’s work in the camp system.” [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/nazi-deported-germany-camp/2021/02/20/725e9876-7329-11eb-93bec10813e358a2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/nazi-deported-germany-camp/2021/02/20/725e9876-7329-11eb-93bec10813e358a2_story.html)

### **Bilateral and multilateral news.**

Algeria/France. On 20 January historian Benjamin Stora gave French president Emmanuel Macron his report on the colonization of Algeria and the Algerian war. The 157-page report was immediately controversial, with historians calling it “revisionist.” The U.S. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars translated into English and posted two documents from the papers of Jacques Foccart, French government adviser on African policy from the 1960s to the 1990s, held by France’s Archives nationales; the items provide additional information on wartime covert paramilitary actions including assassinations. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/analysis-stora-report-france-denies-algerian-history-once-again/2148554>; <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/french-paramilitary-actions-and-algerian-war-independence?emci=8fff3707-3a72-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&emdi=22c1fa27-c372-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&ceid=29308>

Balkan wars. *BIRN* reported that two Bosnian NGOs--Transitional Justice, Responsibility and Memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Centre for Democracy and Transitional Justice--published research identifying “more than 600 detention camps, prisons or other jail facilities that operated” during the 1992-1995 war. Many of the sites were documented through court verdicts at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia or in the courts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/02/25/600-bosnian-war-detention-sites-documented-in-new-research/>

Colombia/Venezuela. Columbia announced that it will provide temporary legal status to the more than 1.7 million Venezuelan migrants who have fled to Columbia. According to the *New York Times*, “The decision will allow Venezuelan migrants who register with the Columbian government to stay in the country for 10 years” if they were in Columbia “without permission” before 31 January 2021. The status will allow migrants to work legally and have access to Colombia’s national health system, including its national COVID-19 vaccination plans. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/world/americas/colombia-venezuela-migrants-duque.html?emci=6186c833-d86a-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&emdi=f47b3b29-db6a-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&ceid=4606001>

Eritrea/Ethiopia. Amnesty International interviewed 41 survivors and witnesses of the killings by Eritrean troops of “hundreds of unarmed civilians in the northern [Ethiopian] city of Axum on 28-29 November 2020 . . . in a massacre that may amount to a crime against humanity.” Satellite imagery analysis by Amnesty’s Crisis Evidence Lab “corroborates reports of indiscriminate shelling and mass looting as well as identifies signs of new mass burials near two of the city’s churches.” Amnesty “has collected the names of more than 240 of the victims,” and called for a UN-led investigation into the “grave violations in Axum.” <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-unarmed-civilians-may-amount-to-crime-against-humanity/>

Finland/Liberia. Finland’s trial of Liberian Gibril Massaquoi for war crimes committed during the Liberian civil war (1999-2003) began. *Front Page Africa* reported that the prosecution “relies on testimonies gathered during the pre-trial investigation” between 2018 and 2020. It also reported that Massaquoi “tried to influence witnesses in the case” by leaving handwritten notes in the restroom of the

family meeting area. *New Narratives* reported that the prosecutor “cited a manuscript for a book, an autobiography of sorts, that had been found by investigators on Mr Massaquoi’s computer. Titled ‘The Secret Behind the Gun: Understanding the RUF Insurgency and the Socio-Economic and Political Problems of Sierra Leone,’ the book is written by Mr Massaquoi, but with contributors, the accused told the court.” The case has 3800 pages of evidence. <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/front-slider/liberia-trial-of-former-ruf-commander-set-to-begin-before-finnish-court/>; <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/front-slider/prosecution-alleges-gibril-massaquoi-directed-witnesses-in-war-crimes-trial/>; <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/442547-frustration-shows-on-final-day-of-massaquoi-trial-in-finland.html>

France/Rwanda. The research director at France’s National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) at Paris Diderot University has been studying official archives related to France’s role in the Rwandan genocide, since the French Council of State opened the archives last June. He told the media that French officials had ignored warning signs of the genocide, saying, “France also gave intense military support to keep the [genocidal] regime alive. Arms support continued secretly during and after the genocide,” *Anadolu Agency* reported. French president Emmanuel Macron has appointed a panel of experts to investigate France’s role in the genocide, but the French presidency “has not yet reviewed or officially owned up [to] its role in the genocide.” The executive secretary of Ibula (remember), an umbrella group for Rwanda genocide survivors’ associations, “voiced hope that the French panel of experts . . . will dig up the truth.” <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/archives-expose-french-role-in-rwandan-genocide/2127117>

Germany/Syria. A court in Koblenz, Germany, sentenced former Syrian secret service agent Eyad Al-Gharib to four and a half years in prison on charges of aiding and abetting crimes against humanity, *DW* reported. For background on the evidence, including the Caesar photographs, see *SAHR News* 2020-12. <https://www.dw.com/en/german-court-hands-down-historic-syrian-torture-verdict/a-56670243>

Guatemala/Israel. Israel both sold weapons to the Guatemalan government during its civil war (ended 1996) and provided military training for Guatemalan soldiers. According to *TRT World*, in late 2019 an Israeli human rights defender demanded that Israel’s chief prosecutor investigate the state’s role in the Guatemalan civil war, “but since then, the Israeli prosecutor’s investigation slowed as the country’s defense ministry stalled the disclosure of sensitive documents.” <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/israel-s-role-in-war-crimes-committed-during-the-guatemalan-civil-war-44285>

Libya/United States. “A confidential U.N. report obtained by *The New York Times* and delivered by investigators to the Security Council” revealed how Erik Prince, the former head of the security company Blackwater Worldwide, “deployed a force of foreign mercenaries, armed with attack aircraft, gunboats and cyberwarfare capabilities, to eastern Libya at the height of a major battle in 2019.” The mercenaries left abruptly, leaving “behind a long trail of paperwork” that included “a PowerPoint presentation shown to Mr. Hifter [the militia commander fighting the UN-backed government] and reproduced in the report lists possible ‘high value targets’ for assassination.” The evidence includes “121 pages of code names, cover stories, offshore bank accounts and secretive weapons transfers spanning eight countries.” <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/erik-prince-trump-ally-violated-libya-arms-embargo-u-n-report-says/>

Mideast wars. Killings have surged in the al-Hol camp in Syria’s Kurdish region, *AP* reported. “Al-Hol houses the wives, widows, children and other family members of IS militants—more than 80% of its 62,000 residents are women and children. The majority are Iraqis and Syrians, but it includes some 10,000 people from 57 other countries.” The Rojava Information Center, “an activist collective that tracks news in areas controlled by the SDF [Syrian Defense Forces]” documented 20 killings in al-Hol in January, five of the dead were female and all were Syrian or Iraqi citizens “including a member of the local police force.” The local Kurdish authority said that “IS supporters in the camp carry out trials against residents suspected of opposing them.” <https://apnews.com/article/killings-surge-syria-camp-isis-families-1aef71d9c11cc4b9f77ac22fa205601b>

Saudi Arabia/Turkey/United States. The U.S. declassified a 4-page intelligence report on the 2018 murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. It said bluntly, “We assess that Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman approved an operation in Istanbul, Turkey, to capture or kill Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.” [https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkd9g7/mbs-approved-operation-to-capture-or-kill-khashoggi-declassified-us-intel-report?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=editorial&utm\\_content=news&utm\\_campaign=210226](https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkd9g7/mbs-approved-operation-to-capture-or-kill-khashoggi-declassified-us-intel-report?utm_source=email&utm_medium=editorial&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=210226;); for the \_\_\_\_\_ report, see <https://freedomforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Assessment-Saudi-Gov-Role-in-JK-Death-20210226.pdf>

Sweden/Syria. *JusticeInfo.net* described the “structural investigation” into Syria war crimes underway by the Swedish Public Prosecutor’s Office. The prosecutor said, “The idea behind this structural investigation is. . . to preserve evidence, to make sure we have these events documented, so it can be used in any case, in particular in Europe or in a potential international jurisdiction one day.” She explained, “We learned lessons from investigations in Rwanda, where we heard victims and witnesses of events that happened more than 20 years ago. We understood that if we could have catalogued evidence and documented these events earlier, it would have been better. . . . Since we have an important Syrian community in Sweden, we understood there was potentially a lot of evidence in our country regarding the crimes committed in Syria.” <https://www.justiceinfo.net/fr/73576-suede-premiere-ligne-front-dossiers-syriens.html>

### **National news.**

Afghanistan. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a joint report on the conditions in government detention from 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2020. Based on 656 interviews with men, women and children “suspected, accused or convicted of security or terrorism-related offences” and held in 63 detention facilities across Afghanistan, the report said “30.3% of those interviewed” claimed to have been subject to “torture or other forms of ill-treatment.” Among other findings, “nearly half were asked to sign or place their thumbprint on a document without knowing its content, rendering the validity of the prosecutorial process questionable.” The statistics are from government detention only, because the UN had no access to Taliban detention facilities or those of other “anti-government elements.” <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26713>

The same two UN organizations issued the Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Annual Report 2020, which “documents the appalling level of harm inflicted on civilians and traces the disturbing spike in violence against them in the last quarter of the year.” For the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, UNAMA documented more than 3,000 civilians killed; children and women were 43% of the casualties. “Anti-Governments Elements (AGEs) in 2020 caused the majority of civilian casualties (62%) . . . with the Taliban responsible for most of these (45% of the total).” <https://unama.unmissions.org/surge-civilian-casualties-following-afghanistan-peace-negotiations-start-un-report>

Argentina. Ursula Bahillo was killed by her police officer ex-boyfriend on February 17, becoming 2021’s 44<sup>th</sup> femicide victim. She had recently reported her killer’s abusive behavior to authorities. “Thousands . . . gathered outside the Supreme Court of Argentina” in protest, *Al Jazeera* reported, and *memesrandom* said police fired rubber bullets against her family and friends who gathered to demand justice. Femicides by police officers are recurrent--over the past decade 48 women were killed by members of the police force in Argentina, reported CELS, an NGO. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/24/rage-boils-over-amid-argentinas-unrelenting-femicide-crisis>; <https://en.memesrandom.com/the-murder-of-a-young-woman-by-her-police-ex-boyfriend-shocks-argentina/>; <https://violenciapolicial.org.ar/>

The Senate passed a law to compensate the relatives of the crew of *ARA San Juan*, the submarine that sank in November 2017 killing all 44 people on board, *teleSUR* reported. Families must claim for compensation within a year, and those who receive funds will have to agree not to initiate lawsuits related to the sinking and to stop any current legal actions. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-09 supp. [https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Argentina-To-Compensate-Relatives-of-Submarine-Crew-20210225-0012.html?utm\\_source=planisys&utm\\_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_content=8](https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Argentina-To-Compensate-Relatives-of-Submarine-Crew-20210225-0012.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=8)

In April 1992 Raghda Habbal “obtained Argentine nationality by naturalization, after taking an oath and renouncing her original [Syrian] nationality.” She has three sons, one born in Argentina., and had been in Argentina since July 1990, obtaining permanent residency because her husband had a residence permit. However, a month after she was granted citizenship the National Director of Population and Migration declared the residency of Mrs. Habbal and her three children void “due to evidence of fraudulent actions to obtain it,” after a previous decision to void the residency of her husband. She appealed, arguing that she had not been notified of the process and there was “no proof of the alleged ideological falsity of the documents or her bad faith.” The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights referred the case to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to consider the “arbitrary” actions by Argentina. [http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media\\_center/preleases/2021/039.asp](http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media_center/preleases/2021/039.asp)

Bangladesh. “Bangladesh’s military purchased sophisticated and highly intrusive mobile phone surveillance equipment from Israel, which Bangladesh military commanders claimed was ‘for one of the Army Contingents due to be deployed in the UN Peacekeeping mission,’” *Al Jazeera* reported. A UN spokesperson said, “Such equipment has not been deployed with Bangladeshi contingents in United Nations peacekeeping operations,” and called for an investigation “by the relevant authorities.” *Al Jazeera* obtained the contract for the purchase, which “deliberately concealed the fact that the manufacturer, PicSix, is an Israeli company,” and also “obtained covert recordings of a middleman” admitting that the system was Israeli made. Privacy International said the system can be used “to collect information on people taking part in demonstrations,” which could mean the military intends to use the equipment to monitor opposition groups. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/4/un-calls-for-bangladesh-army-probe-after-al-jazeera-investigation>

Bolivia. Retired general Luis Valverde was charged with responsibility for the November 2019 “Senkata massacre” in which 10 people were killed and 31 injured, *teleSUR* reported. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-03. [https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bolivia-Gen.-Valverde-To-Be-Tried-for-the-Senkata-Massacre-20210211-0005.html?utm\\_source=planisys&utm\\_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_content=10](https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bolivia-Gen.-Valverde-To-Be-Tried-for-the-Senkata-Massacre-20210211-0005.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=10)

The parliament approved an Amnesty and Pardon law for the more than 1,000 persons prosecuted by the former government of Jeanine Anez, including former president Evo Morales, *teleSUR* reported. The law spells out the documents that must be submitted, either by a Bolivian citizen or by a foreigner, to receive an amnesty or pardon. Thanks to Eduardo Gonzalez for the text of the law. <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bolivia-Approves-Amnesty-Law-for-Persecuted-by-Anez-Govt-20210212-0014.html>

Brazil. On 20 January, Brazilians experienced the largest personal data leakage ever discovered—nearly 224 million individuals (13 million deceased) had their ID number, marital status, list of all first-degree relatives, complete home addresses “(including latitude and longitude),” credit score, voter registration number, profession, date of birth, gender and more on sale on the Dark Web for between \$0.075 and \$1 per individual, the NGO Open Democracy reported. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/largest-personal-data-leakage-brazilian-history/>

Cameroon. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that on 1 March 2020 Cameroonian soldiers attacked the village of Ebam in the country’s English-speaking southwest and “raped at least 20 women, including four with disabilities, arrested 35 men, and killed one man.” For the report HRW conducted telephone interviews with victims, witnesses, and persons who aided the victims, viewed photographs of the burial site of the man killed, and also “consulted confidential reports by an international nongovernmental organization and the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/26/cameroon-survivors-military-assault-await-justice>

Cameroon “detained eight soldiers after a video emerged . . . showing them in uniform torturing a victim with a machete until he fell unconscious,” reported *Reuters*, quoting the Defense Ministry. The incident occurred on 11 February in the northwest region, another English-speaking area. <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-02-15/cameroon-detains-eight-soldiers-after-torture-video-emerge>

Canada. The country’s privacy commissioner announced that the facial recognition app Clearview AI is illegal mass surveillance and sent a “letter of intention” to the company telling it to cease offering its facial recognition services in Canada, cease the “scraping” of Canadians’ faces from online sources, and delete images already collected. He said the company was putting people “continually in a police lineup.” [https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/opc-news/news-and-announcements/2021/nr-c\\_210203/](https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/opc-news/news-and-announcements/2021/nr-c_210203/)

Colombia. Human Rights Watch released a report on the plague of killings of human rights defenders by armed groups. It documented murders during the last five years, interviewing “more than 130 people in 20 of Columbia’s 32 states,” and reviewing information and statistics provided by a half dozen government offices. According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, over 400 human rights defenders have been killed since 2016. HRW said “the government’s response has been mostly talk, with little meaningful action.” The government said the Attorney General’s Office and the government’s ombudsman will “work to create [a] unified register of social leader violence,” *Crisis Watch* reported, adding that “civil society watchdogs” said the move “is intended to minimize [the] gravity of

risk toward social leaders.”  
<https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/10/colombia-protection-gaps-endanger-rights-defenders>

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) “made public the preliminary results of its investigation into the ‘false positives’ scandal, following the exhumation of mass graves across the country over the past two years,” the *Guardian* reported. “False positives” are cases when the army murdered a person and “falsely declared combat kills in order to boost statistics in the civil war with leftist rebel groups.” At least 6,402 people were killed by these extrajudicial executions from 2002 to 2008, JEP said. For background see *SAHR News* 2020-05. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/19/colombia-farc-tribunal-false-positives>

The *Guardian* also reported that Temblores, an NGO monitoring state violence, documented 86 people killed by police officers in 2020, 7,992 cases of police assault and 30 cases of sexual violence “with migrant communities and Afro-Colombians often the victims.” <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/25/colombia-police-killings-violence-reform?emci=f0fd2ff6-6677-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&emdi=4451e9e5-6777-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&ceid=4606001>

Guatemala. The Constitutional Court rejected the Ministry of Interior’s appeal against the protective order issued last year to guarantee the safekeeping and operation of the Historical Archives of the National Police (AHPN), reported *La Hora*. The order was issued when the Ministry, which includes the police, refused to renew the agreement with the Ministry of Culture for the protection and custody of the archives. Thanks to Lizbeth Barrientos for the link. <https://lahora.gt/cc-confirma-amparo-que-garantiza-proteccion-del-archivo-historico-de-la-pn/>

Guinea. A fire on 30 January in a building of the Governorate of Conakry “is believed to have consumed all civil status archives from 1898 to the present day,” reported *GuinéeNews.org*. The loss includes all birth certificates. [https://www.guineenews.org/conakry-un-incendie-ravage-toutes-les-archives-detat-civil-du-gouvernat/?utm\\_source=ICA+Members+and+contacts+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=ee8274e64a-EMAIL\\_Newsletter\\_FEB\\_2021&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_84a7f06290-ee8274e64a-225732189](https://www.guineenews.org/conakry-un-incendie-ravage-toutes-les-archives-detat-civil-du-gouvernat/?utm_source=ICA+Members+and+contacts+Newsletter&utm_campaign=ee8274e64a-EMAIL_Newsletter_FEB_2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_84a7f06290-ee8274e64a-225732189)

India. In a protest against new agricultural laws, thousands of farmers came to New Delhi. Gurdeep Dhaliwal, a photographer, launched a newspaper on the protests, becoming “one of the main record keepers of the historic protests,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. Dhaliwal said, “We knew that as the protests went on, media coverage could flag, so we wanted to keep up our reporting and be able [to] document the protest and create a record.” <https://news.trust.org/item/20210204122541-lsx4d/>

Sixteen activists have been charged with plotting to overthrow the government, and a key piece of evidence is letters found on the computer of one of the men, Rona Wilson. At the request of Wilson’s attorney, the Massachusetts-based digital forensics firm Arsenal Consulting “examined an electronic copy of the laptop” and concluded that “an attacker used malware to infiltrate” the laptop and deposit the letters there, reported the *Washington Post*. The firm also said that the “same attacker deployed some of the same servers and IP addresses to target Wilson’s co-defendants in the case over a period of four years.” The case is now three years old, and “the charging documents . . . now run to more than 17,000 pages” including both digital evidence and witness statements. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/india-bhima-koregaon-activists-jailed/2021/02/10/8087f172-61e0-11eb-a177-7765f29a9524\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/india-bhima-koregaon-activists-jailed/2021/02/10/8087f172-61e0-11eb-a177-7765f29a9524_story.html)

Ireland. A member of parliament urged that the term of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes be extended “amid criticism about the manner in which some of its records were destroyed,” *Irish Times* reported. In its report the Commission said the audio recordings of 550 witnesses “were destroyed after the report was added to the confidential committee electronic repository of information,” but the parliamentarian said that the Minister for Children had assured survivors that they “would be able to access their own stories and also a clause in the 2004 Commission of Investigation Act that the commission is required to retain all evidence it receives.” The Commission’s archives transferred to the Ministry for Children as of 28 February. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/confidential-records-destroyed-without-consent-td-claims-1.4476559>

Israel. After three years of effort by Akevot Institute, an NGO, to obtain an unredacted copy of the 18-page Riffin report, Israel’s Military Censor issued a written opinion that there was no “censorship impediment to publishing the report,” which Akevot has now done. The report’s 35 annexes remain

“inaccessible to the public.” The report, written during February and March 1948 by Yaakov Riftin, a member of the Yishuv’s Security Committee, covered his investigation of “a string of serious events . . . in which members of the Haganah were suspected—including extrajudicial killing, looting, and torture during interrogation.” Yishuv is the term for Jews living in Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel, and Haganah was the yishuv’s underground military organization from 1920 to 1948. <https://www.akevot.org.il/en/article/riftin-report/?full>

The audio archives of scholar Clinton Bailey—hundreds of hours of recordings of Bedouin poetry, history and legal system—are now being transcribed and digitized by Israel’s National Library, *AFP* reported. The library “hired members of Israel’s Bedouin community to help, among other things, transcribe the recordings using their knowledge of the local dialect.” Land ownership is “one of the main bones of contention between the Bedouins and Israeli authorities,” and “Bedouin property rights are codified in their oral legal system,” making the Bailey recordings an important source of evidence. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/rare-israeli-bedouin-audio-archive-digitized-to-boost-study-of-nomadic-society/>

Malaysia. An appeals court ruled that the Malaysian news site *Malaysiakini* is “legally responsible for reader comments deemed insulting to the judiciary” and ordered it to pay a fine of nearly \$124,000, reported the *New York Times*. <https://www.eurasiareview.com/22022021-malaysia-court-finds-news-site-guilty-of-contempt-over-readers-comments/>

Montenegro. The Special Prosecutor for Organized Crime opened an investigation “into claims that officials from the former government destroyed secret files” from 2016-2020 relating to illegal wiretapping and surveillance, *BIRN* reported. For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-01. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/02/02/montenegro-probes-ex-officials-for-destroying-secret-documents/>

Nepal. The government extended for six months the terms of the commissioners of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons, the *Kathmandu Post* reported. The commissions were established in February 2015 and have a troubled history. “The disappearance commission has completed a preliminary investigation of all the complaints while the truth commission has done the primary investigation of around 5,000 complaints. However, they haven’t completed an investigation into a single case.” For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-02, 03. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2021/02/04/government-decides-to-extend-tenure-of-two-transitional-justice-commissions-till-mid-july>

North Macedonia. The Skopje Criminal Court found the former head of the secret police, Saso Mijalkov, guilty of “criminal association, abuse of office and receiving a reward for illegal influence” and sentenced him to jail for 12 years; 10 other defendants were also convicted, *BIRN* reported. The case focused on the illegal wiretapping of more than 4,200 telephones between 2008 and 2015 without court authorization and for illegally extending court-approved taps on another 1,541 phones. For background see *HRWG News* 2016-11. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/02/26/north-macedonia-jails-ex-secret-police-chief-in-wiretapping-case/>

Pakistan. A judge of the Faisalabad Session Court ordered a 13-year-old girl reunited with her family, *UCA News* reported. She had been kidnapped, forcibly converted to Islam, and married to a 45-year-old man. The judge said, “Since the marriage . . . has not been registered and Nikah [marriage contract] has not been verified by the Union Council concerned” she must be returned. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-11. [https://www.eurasiareview.com/20022021-pakistan-court-orders-return-of-abducted-christian-girl/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](https://www.eurasiareview.com/20022021-pakistan-court-orders-return-of-abducted-christian-girl/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

Panama. “A Parliamentary investigation revealed that dozens of Panamanian minors were sexually abused and physically and psychologically mistreated by their caretakers in at least 12 state-owned shelters over the last four years,” *teleSUR* reported. A member of the investigating commission said that after a local media report on the abuses, “we also received dozens of emails with more accusations.” [https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Panama-Sexual-Abuse-of-Minors-in-State-Run-Shelters-Uncovered-20210212-0007.html?utm\\_source=planisys&utm\\_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_content=8](https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Panama-Sexual-Abuse-of-Minors-in-State-Run-Shelters-Uncovered-20210212-0007.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=8)

Peru. After a long struggle by activists, Congress passed a law that will provide compensation to victims of forced sterilizations that occurred during President Alberto Fujimori’s administration (1990-2000), *teleSUR* reported. “Over 350,000 women and 25,000 men were sterilized against their will” and “at least

18 people died during the surgery.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2018-04. [https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Peru-to-Compensate-Victims-of-Forced-Sterilizations-20210225-0009.html?utm\\_source=planisys&utm\\_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm\\_content=10](https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Peru-to-Compensate-Victims-of-Forced-Sterilizations-20210225-0009.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=10)

Poland. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, “a local-government body representing 820 million Europeans in 47 countries,” sent a report to the Council of Europe saying that the anti-gay resolutions and “LGBT-free zones” established in nearly 100 regions, towns and cities in Poland have bred violence and given rise to “violence and discrimination against that community,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. Hate crimes against LGBT+ people “more than doubled to 150 in 2019, according to official data cited in the report. Only 16% of Polish LGBT+ people reported the latest homophobic attack they had suffered to police, a 2020 EU survey found.” <https://news.trust.org/item/20210210140510-940dc/>; : <https://mycloud.coe.int/index.php/s/ycpNiEDTeo5s5ea?dir=undefined&path=%2FCURRENT%20AFFAIRS%20COMMITTEE%20-%20COMMISSION%20DES%20QUESTIONS%20D%27ACTUALITES%20-%2010%20February%202021%2FDocuments%20-%20English&openfile=4136249>

Russia. Bellingcat, the investigative NGO, issued a report linking a unit of the Russian security service (FSB) to an attempted poisoning of Vladimir Kara-Murza that took place in Moscow. For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-01. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2021/02/11/vladimir-kara-murza-tailed-by-members-of-fsb-squad-prior-to-suspected-poisonings/>

South Sudan. Amnesty International issued a report on the “chilling effect of surveillance in South Sudan.” It interviewed 63 people, “reviewed documentary evidence of surveillance equipment,” and “reviewed over 57 reports and studies” from a range of organizations. It did not get responses to inquiries sent to the government. The government bought communications surveillance equipment from Israel, and “tapped telephone conversations have been presented as evidence in court, recounted to a detainee in interrogations, and appear to have provided leads for arbitrary arrests.” The National Security Service “also monitors media and social media and has used this information to arbitrarily arrest and illegally detain journalists and human rights defenders.” <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR6535772021ENGLISH.pdf>

United Kingdom. In a joint report, NGOs Centre for Women’s Justice and Justice for Women explained that “women who kill their male abusers are often failed by a British justice system that can treat them as cold-blooded murderers rather than seeing them as victims too,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. The researchers reviewed the cases of 92 women who killed men and found “evidence of previous violence or abuse by the men in more than three quarters of the cases.” Forty percent of the women were convicted of murder, “a similar number found guilty of manslaughter,” and 6 acquitted. <https://news.trust.org/item/20210217163258-okby7/>

Cadent Gas Ltd. is a gas distribution network. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found “Cadent’s management records were incomplete and . . . that records on 769 buildings were missing, meaning gas risers in these . . . had not been subject to a condition survey, inspection or routine maintenance for a number of years.” Determining that incomplete records were transferred to Cadent when it bought part of its operations from National Grid Gas, the Liverpool Crown Court fined NGG over 4 million pounds. The principal inspector for HSE said, “This sentence reflects how important it is when companies are charged with ensuring records that could keep people safe and well are up to date, that they make that task a priority.” <https://www.hsmsearch.com/National-Grid-Gas-missing-records>

United States. The Cherokee Nation eliminated “from its Constitution language that based citizenship on being descended ‘by blood’ from tribal members listed on a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century census,” thereby extending citizenship to the descendants of Black people who had been enslaved by members of the tribe before the Civil War, the *New York Times* reported. The “census,” called Dawes Rolls or Final Rolls, are lists of individuals who were accepted as eligible for tribal membership in the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole Nations at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rolls are held by the National Archives. <https://openpaper.com/chokeee-nation-addresses-bias-against-descendants-of-enslaved-people/>

*AP* and Deep Discovery, an artificial intelligence company, built “a classification algorithm that matched officials to accounts on the right-wing aligned Parler, a social media platform that was taken off line” on 10 January 2021. “*AP* reporters hand-verified each match using an “archived Parler dataset” of “183

million posts and 13 million user profiles” that had been compiled by a New York University researcher between August 2018 and the date Parler ceased. *AP* reviewed “public and private social media accounts of nearly 1,000 federal, state, and local elected and appointed Republican officials nationwide,” and found that “a faction” of them pushed “lies, misinformation and conspiracy theories that echo those that helped inspire the violent U.S. Capitol” attack on 6 January. “Although Democrats have also used incendiary and aggressive language online, *AP* focused its research on the GOP [Republicans] because court documents show the overwhelming number of people arrested in association with the Capitol insurrection are longtime supporters” of former president Trump. <https://apnews.com/article/local-gop-leaders-conspiracy-theories-0ef88e6f3b2b418ae07b214131d7f128>

“Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers have tapped a private database containing hundreds of millions of phone, water, electricity and other utility records while pursuing immigration violations, according to public documents uncovered by Georgetown Law [school] researchers and shared with the *Washington Post*.” The database, CLEAR, includes “billions of records related to people’s employment, housing, credit reports, criminal histories and vehicle registrations from utility companies in all 50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands” and is updated daily. CLEAR is run by the “media and data conglomerate Thomson Reuters” which said “in documents that its utility data comes from the credit-reporting giant Equifax.” <https://www.democraticunderground.com/117814224>

United States/Illinois. After years of filing freedom of information requests, researchers gathered “three years of data on daily activities of officers in the Chicago Police Department.” Reporting in *Science*, the team said it compared data on “officer demographics, language skills, daily shift assignments, and career progression” to “time-stamped, geolocated records of the same officers’ decisions to stop, arrest and use force against civilians.” They found that Black, Hispanic and female officers made fewer stops and arrests than their white male counterparts, making a “case that diversifying a police force can reduce conflicts between officers and the community without making any trade-offs in public safety.” <https://www.aas.org/news/dataset-reveals-threat-minorities-policed-white-and-male-officers>

United States/New York. A Federal appeals court cleared the way for the city “to release hundreds of thousands of police disciplinary records,” the *New York Times* reported. Last June the State Legislature repealed a law which kept such records confidential; police unions sought to block the release. <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/179213>

**Good reads.** Freedom House, *Transnational Repression Is a Growing Threat to Global Democracy*: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/transnational-repression>

Maya Wang, “Complicated Legacies: The Human Genome at 20; Risks of Genomic Surveillance and How to Stop It,” *Science*: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/05/complicated-legacies-human-genome-20>

Nema Milaninia, “Biases in Machine Learning Models and Big Data Analytics: The International Criminal and Humanitarian Law Implications,” *International Review of the Red Cross*: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3744164> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3744164>

Robin Geiss and Henning Lahmann, “Protection of Data in Armed Conflict,” *International Law Studies*: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/ils/vol97/iss1/27/?fbclid=IwAR0o4832rP37H1pUsp3wemVBelVGXMotyzERb6tKBnONrGgAKPnn8oRwlGk>

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