

# TBSRJMUN XXI

## Human Rights Council



TBSRJMUN XXI

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## LETTER TO DELEGATES

Dear delegates,

Welcome to the Human Rights Council! It is our honour to serve as chairs for the upcoming TBSRJMUN XXI. We would firstly like to thank you for your interest in this conference and committee, and excitedly await your ideas and insights. We hope that this Study Guide supports your understanding of these topics, and inspires you to actively participate in the committee.

In this year's edition we have chosen to address the disproportionate police and armed forces interventions in Latin American countries, and discuss journalist persecution worldwide. We are confident that by the end of the conference, delegates will have adopted an open-minded and participative stance, and will have thoroughly explored both topics.

We highly encourage the use of this Study Guide as a starting point, and hope that it will guide you to do further research on your own. We eagerly await for your insightful proposed solutions and astute points. If you find yourself troubled at any point, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to seeing you in September!

Sincerely,

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## Committee Description

The Human Rights Council, created on March 15, 2006, by the United Nations General Assembly, is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations. Replacing the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council was created with the purpose of strengthening, promoting, and protecting human rights globally, as well as solving humanitarian crises and addressing situations where human rights have been violated. It is composed of 47 member states elected by the general assembly, each of them serving a 3-year term.

The Human Rights Council's Headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland, and has three substantive divisions, which permits a higher level of efficiency and organisation. Additionally, the HRC works with the support of non-governmental organisations in order to highlight human rights violations in their regions, bringing the Council's attention towards it. The Human Rights Council holds three sessions throughout the year but may decide at any time to hold a special session if one-third of the Member States request it. It is important to note that the Council's resolutions are not legally binding, yet do contain strong political commitments, meaning that the countries who sign these documents are not necessarily obliged to follow through with its clauses.

The Human Rights Council holds a heavy influence on international decisions and was created in order to protect those who are most vulnerable internationally.



**Topic A:**  
**Addressing the Disproportionate  
Police and Armed Force Interventions  
Against Civilians**

**Background Information**

## Introduction

During and after the pandemic, the amount of civilians who have suffered from excessive and reckless uses of force from the military has increased excessively. Such uses of force tend to trigger social unrest and distrust in governmental agencies.

The abuse of authority from police and military forces has caused diverse violent responses from citizens. It was documented by the Human Rights Watch that in Ecuador, in 2019, dozens of officers were held against their will by protester masses, and in Chile, over 1800 individuals were injured during protests, which favoured those from the far right.

It is important to note that African and Latin American nations have long struggled with social unrest, drug trafficking, crime, violence, and political instability, factors which have led to violent and aggressive responses from governments.

Additionally, with the enormous communist wave that engulfed many countries during the 1900s, unemployment, inflation, and hunger were common amid the post World War II frustrations. All of these factors contributed enormously to the global abuse of authoritarian power and armed forces interventions.

## History

By 1979, more than two-thirds of Latin Americans lived under military rule. However, it seemed as if, by 1993, the democratisation of Central and South American countries was underway. It was Guillermo O'Donnell, distinguished Argentinian political scientist, who in 2004 acknowledged that from the standpoint of public opinion, democracy was not thriving.

## Mexican Dictatorship

The Porfiriato era began in 1876. Porfirio Diaz ascended to power via a military coup, and remained president until 1911. During the Porfiriato, authority was centralised, crime rates lowered, and economic nationalism began embracing foreign investment. Due to this sharp shift in the nation's economy, it thrived, and technological advancements were abundant. However, due to the uneven distribution of wealth, social inequality became far more apparent.

Diaz was famously a liberal Mexican army general, whose support grew after the War of the Reform and the French intervention in Mexico, a set of events which witnessed the defeat of conservatives.

The General's first term serving as president in 1876 ended after four years, and witnessed Diaz seeking recognition from the American Government. The Plan of Tuxtepec, which stated explicitly that presidents were not to be reelected, was violated by Diaz during the elections of 1884. Diaz refused to step down from his presidency until 1911, when he was challenged by Francisco Madero, under the slogan "Effective suffrage, no reelection". For further external research on the Porfiriato, you may visit [this link](#).

### **The Cuban Revolution**

The Cuban revolution took place between the years 1953 and 1959 and began after the 1952 coup d'etat which inaugurated Fulgencio Batista as head of state, initiating a de-facto military dictatorship. Fidel Castro was responsible for organising an armed attack on the Cuban military's Moncada barracks on July 26, 1953; he was in prison when they formed the 26th of July Movement (for more information on the movement, please visit [this link](#)). The M-26-7 rebel group would tirelessly defy the Cuban government, slowly defeating it in the countryside, while recruiting more rebels in the urban areas. Over time, the Popular Socialist Party became supportive of the 26th of July Movement.

In 1956, Castro and a small group of revolutionaries started a guerrilla campaign on the Sierra Maestra, which successfully defeated Batista's forces. Batista fled Cuba on January 1st, 1959, and Castro assumed presidency, enforcing a socialist society in Cuba.

The revolution led to great tension between Cuba and the USA. The American government began creating plans in order to boycott the Cuban socialist government. Multiple actions were taken, one of the most famously known being the Bay of Pigs Invasion. To this day, the United States and Cuba are still at political unrest.

## Brazilian Dictatorship

In 1964, the Brazilian coup d'état took place. The coup d'état was a military coup which overthrew president João Goulart (Jango), thus ending the Fourth Brazilian Republic and initiating the Brazilian Military Dictatorship. Brazilian society was split between the Right (national and multinational business, the traditional middle class, large landowners, the high military command, and the Catholic Church), and the Left (radical nationalists, laborites, and communists). The United States was weary of Brazilian President Jango, and feared that Brazil would face a socialist revolution, similar to the Cuban Revolution. Therefore, the United States supported the overthrow of President Goulart.

The Military installed a tutelary authoritarian regime to control civilians and the political system, serving as the model for similar Latin American regimes during the Cold War. The Military's aim was to depoliticize the nation, disencouraging civil mobilisation, mobilisation around political parties and charismatic leaders. It was after the passing of the Institutional Act No.5 that censorship of the press and artistic works and workers became strictly enforced. Additionally, it was from that point on that the military regime formalised the extrajudicial repression of political crimes, kidnapping and questioning militants and opposing civilians, often using torture and inhumane methods. It was not uncommon for those civilians to face extralegal execution.

In 1969, Operation Bandeirante (OBAN) was created by the military regime as an effort to join the repressive forces in Brazil, therefore leading to the union of the State Policies (military and civilian), the Federal Police, and the Armed Forces. The OBAN has the goal of investigating and taking down revolutionary communist factions. The Organization acted with complete disregard for fundamental human rights, and became a symbol of violence. From 1971 on, the OBAN became the International Operations Centre-Operation and Information Detachment (DOI-CODI).

Between 1968 and 1973, the Brazilian economy skyrocketed, diminishing inflation levels and masking social inequalities. The expansion of industry and agriculture in Brazil mostly benefited the middle class and the more skilled working class. However, oil consumption in Brazil was 90 percent international, which caused the country's economy to crash in 1973 as a consequence of the Oil Crisis.

In 1974, Brazilians were found dissatisfied with their government, and support for the military regime began to wane as the great economic "miracle" ended and inflation rose. The Geisel government stood for military governance without such a heavy reliance on the use of force and police repression. Despite being remembered for paving the way for democracy in Brazil, the Geisel government left a trail of bodies and disappearances, especially of leaders and militants of the illegal Brazilian Communist Party (PCB). The government also softened its grasp upon the media and

press, in the hopes of winning back its support. It was in October 1978 that President Geisel finally announced the end of Institutional Act No.5. This was called the “Political Opening” (“Abertura”).

With this plan of slow liberalisation, the government implemented an amnesty law, the return of a multiparty political system, and the reinstatement of direct elections for state governors. With the continued illegality of the PCB, the party became the Social Democratic Party.

Between 1983 and 1984, the discussion of transferring power from the Military arose. The PT and more progressive parties launched protests demanding direct elections for president. Those protests were joined by opposing parties, bringing thousands to the streets.

After the death of Tancredo Neves in 1985, Jose Sarney became the first civilian Brazilian leader after 21 years of military rule. The new Federal Constitution of Brazil was promulgated three years later, and was the most democratic in its history. Yet, the new democratic system left the nation with police violence, great social and economic inequality, widespread poverty, and corruption.

### **Russian Dictatorship/The Soviet Union**

Tsar Nicholas II ruled Russia from 1894 up to 1917. The Tsar ruled during World War I, and was characterised as shy, indecisive, and an overall weak leader. The decision to enter the War had catastrophic consequences for Russia, including the fall of the Russian economy and a great famine. Tsar Nicholas II was dethroned in 1917.

In October of 1917, Vladimir Lenin rose to power following a Coup D'état. He and the Bolsheviks repressed their opposition in the name of the revolutionary cause, and established Communism in the Soviet Union. The dictatorship used terror as a tool in order to enforce their controversial ideologies.

In 1924, Josip Stalin rose to power. Stalin made State decisions almost by himself, with little influence from other members of State. He, like Lenin, believed that one's individual ideologies and interests were to be sacrificed in order to constantly prioritise the State. Stalin's regime often disregarded the lives of humans, prioritising instead what he thought would be best for the nation as a whole, therefore causing tremendous suffering.

The Great Terror, also known as The Great Purge, was the name given to the period of extreme political repression when Stalin heavily enforced his campaign, and led the Soviet Union through the elimination of perceived enemies. Stalin's government imprisoned, tortured, and executed anyone who was suspected to be

against Stalin's regime. This list of victims included military, civilians, political opponents, and members of the Communist Party itself. This period led to great mistrust within the Soviet Union, and led to an extensive abuse of violence within the Russian police and armed forces.

## Current Situation

33,000 Latin Americans have been killed by the police's misuse of authority in the last decade. Despite the use of body cameras and other forms of technology in an attempt to diminish police brutality and abuse, security services have yet to conquer the trust of civilians.

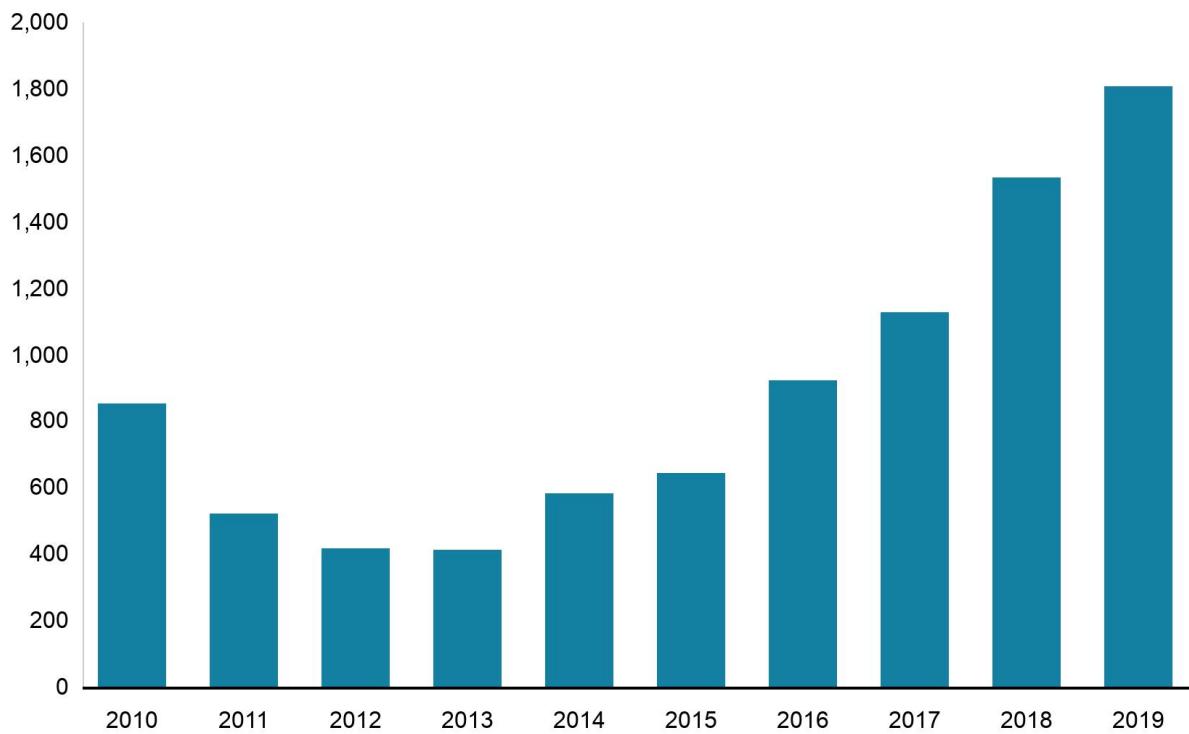
However, poorly paid and trained officers have been patrolling some of the world's most violent cities. The top ten most violent cities in the world are Latin American.

*Top Ten Most Dangerous Cities (2023):*

1. *Tijuana, Mexico*
2. *Acapulco, Mexico*
3. *Caracas, Venezuela*
4. *Ciudad Victoria, Mexico*
5. *Ciudad Juárez, Mexico*
6. *Irapuato, Mexico*
7. *Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela*
8. *Natal, Brazil*
9. *Fortaleza, Brazil*
10. *Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela*

*Source: Rashid, S. (2022). 50 most dangerous cities in the world 2022 (list and photos). [online] Briefly.*

## Number of people killed in police operations in Rio



Source: Rio de Janeiro state government

BBC

In further detail, the diagram above, sourced by the [British Broadcasting](#) Corporation, visually represents the incredible increase in police brutality in the year 2019 on the city of Rio de Janeiro, located in the South-East of Brazil.

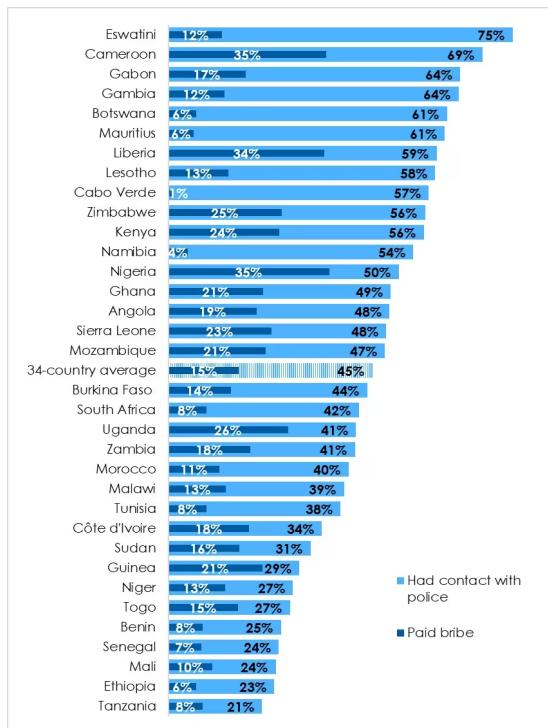
Some possible contributors to the number of police and armed forces murders of civilians can be the large illegal drug market in most Latin American countries, namely Mexico and Colombia, as well as an institutional culture that, in many cases, permits and applauds abuse.

Additionally, Latin America currently faces great poverty and social and economic inequality, further increasing the crime rates in each individual nation. Recent political changes have supported the issue, leading towards economic crises. Such crises have contributed towards the engagement of a higher percentage of the Latin American population to engage in criminal activities.

Despite that, it is clear that the issue is not limited to Latin America. In Africa, many countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Somalia, police brutality is rapidly becoming a reason to be alarmed. According to The Washington Post, Africans over 34 countries see the police as predatory, not protective.

The police are also considered extremely corrupt amongst African Nations. It is clear that the police demand bribes from civilians. The graph below, sourced from The Washington Post, represents what percentage of encounters with the police involved

the demanding of bribes. 7 out of 10 Nigerian citizens who have interacted with the police have had to pay a bribe at least once, confirming the police's reputation based largely upon its dishonesty.



Additionally, it is known that the poorer amongst African society are more likely to be targeted by the police. Evidence of this can be found on the following excerpt: "Across 34 countries surveyed in Round 7 (2016-2018), the poorest respondents were twice as likely as the wealthiest (37 percent vs. 19 percent) to report having suffered a theft from their home in the past year, and they were nearly three times as likely to report having been physically attacked (14 percent vs. 5 percent)." (Logan, 2022). In order to diminish police abuse in African nations, the improvement of education of the armed forces and authorities is essential.

The discussion limiting the extent of authoritarian abuse can be viewed in the world's eastern nations as well, namely India and Russia.

Indian police often use violence as a shortcut under the name of justice. Additionally, the police have proven to be biased, often targeting poorer civilians, especially if they belong to "criminal castes" labelled by the British in the 1800s. India also has an extremely under-staffed police force, with 158 officers for every 100,000 people, making confessions under torture to become the most efficient option to solve crimes, despite its deadly cost. Some of these inhumane methods are beating with a baton and hammering nails into the body, both of which rarely make it to the news. Indian society has become numb to these cruelties, barely caring anymore.

It was in 2020, however, that the deaths of Jayaraj and Bennicks, father and son, served as Indian citizen's wake-up calls to the gruesome reality of police brutality in their nation. ““The poor are easy targets. For the police, the torture or death of the poor comes with no consequence,” says I. Pandiyan, a lawyer and member of Witness For Justice, which works with victims of custodial violence among disadvantaged communities in Tamil Nadu.” (Rao, 2020).

Moving further north along the globe, Russia has been brutally arresting and torturing hundreds of peaceful anti-war protesters. Along with President Putin’s rule came the abuse of power, especially since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war. According to OVD-Info, 13,500 people have been arbitrarily arrested since February 24, the day that Russia began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It could be argued that Russia is, like many African nations, living in a modern dictatorship, with oppression of the media and any opposing propaganda. When making arrests, there has been multiple video evidence of Russian officers using violence to punish helpless men. It is clear that the Russian police have become heavily reliant upon the use of violence, ignoring multiple basic human rights.

Especially with the global chaos instilled by the Russian-Ukrainian war, it is crucial that police and armed forces interventions worldwide are investigated.

## Past UN Actions

- ❖ It is widely recognized by the Human Rights Council that “public confidence in police and other law enforcement officials is paramount for their ability to perform their functions effectively and depends on, inter alia, their respect for the human rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity of all persons” (A/HRC/46/L.27).
- ❖ The Human Rights Council’s 46th session’s resolution: “Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: the roles and responsibilities of police and other law enforcement officials” (A/HRC/46/L.27).
- ❖ “In addition to numerous communications on individual cases or contexts, the experts have repeatedly expressed concern over the general trend towards the increased use of excessive force in the management of assemblies including through dedicated reports to the General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur on Torture to the UN General Assembly on “Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (A/72/178); and jointly by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on the proper management of assemblies (A/HRC/31/66).” (“UN experts call for an end to police brutality worldwide”).

There is a universal consensus regarding actions taken by law enforcement authorities. Officers must be fully trained to show restraint when dealing with unlawful acts, avoiding the use of force.

When absolutely unavoidable, officers must follow four steps before resorting to force.

- 1) **Legality:** any use of force must pursue a lawful purpose and respect equal treatment of all persons before the law in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination;
- 2) **Necessity:** force must only be used when, and to the extent, strictly necessary for the achievement of a lawful purpose, noting that lethal force may only be used when unavoidable to protect against grievous bodily harm or an imminent threat to life;
- 3) **Proportionality:** the harm likely to be inflicted by the use of force must not be excessive compared to the benefit of the lawful purpose pursued;

- 4) **Precaution:** law enforcement operations must always be planned, prepared and conducted so as to minimise, to the greatest extent possible, the resort to force and, whenever it becomes unavoidable, to minimise the resulting harm.” (“UN experts call for an end to police brutality worldwide”).

It was due to these measures and resolutions that important steps towards the development of policing in nations worldwide, including Latin American countries.

# Major Bloc Positions

## **Ukraine**

Ukraine has, for many years, suffered from police brutality against civilians. The excessive use of force and unnecessary violence have been a serious concern in Ukraine. In situations like protests and activist groups, the Brutality is becoming worse and violates the basic human rights of these people. Also, in the past few years, Ukraine has been facing many changes and challenges, especially with the ongoing War.

## **Russia**

Russia, like many countries around the globe, faces various issues with unnecessary police brutality. In Russia, severe cases of torture and killing have been happening with innocent individuals and has broughten about concern about the danger of these events, especially because the safety of the civilians is being put at risk and the human rights are being violated. Some people state that the Russian government has been "ignoring" these types of situations and instead they may even be restricting the liberty of the civilians therefore making it difficult to live in a safe and peaceful environment.

## **USA**

In the US, the concern with these issues varies from state to state, That means each state has a specific view and belief One vivid example of this is George Floyd, who was killed by policemen, when he was just a civilian, the brutality was clear and not only him but many african americans in the USA suffer from the same problem and are constantly scared of policemen because of issues like this one. Race discrimination from policemen to individuals is in fact a very big issue and concern in the United States. After the Floyd murder, in 2020, president Donald trump signed an executive order to create a federal database of decertified and terminated police officers.

## Brazil

Brazil has faced serious issues with police brutality, for example, their dictatorship, years ago. Brazil is considered to be a country with many violence issues, and therefore policemen are expected to act upon them to maintain a stable environment. Nevertheless, the fact that police have killed 18 people per day, and the states of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia concentrate 43% of the cases, have led to violations against civilians and unnecessary force, and that is in fact an issue, which can even lead to fatality. Especially in the comunidades, which are considered an area that suffers even more from these violations, and the individuals are affected by shootouts and special police operations to prevent gang and drug related operations. The rate of police brutality in Brazil is high and frequent.

## China

The Chinese people's armed police force is a military system, but it undertakes police duties. China has an authoritarian government and the fact that excessive force from authorities is being used when it is not necessary. This happens especially in situations of political protests or activism that goes against the government. Tibet, in China, is the region that faces the most police brutality out of all of them. On the other hand, even taking these matters into concern, The Chinese government has been accused of impunity for this matter.

## Timeline of Events

- May 25, 1911** The end of the Porfiriato.
- January 1, 1959** President Castro's rise to power in Cuba, and the start of the Cuban socialist regime.
- August 8, 1979** Walter Arze becomes interim president for a year, becoming the first civilian Bolivian president since 1969.
- October 30, 1982** First Argentinian elections after their military dictatorship.
- March 15, 1985** Start of Jose Sarney's government as the first civilian Brazilian president in 21 years.
- August 29, 1993** The Vigario Geral massacre takes place in Brazil.
- May 30, 2009** Mexican police officers prevented a group of 60 flower vendors from attending a market, using violence against those who resisted, killing two men, and sexually assaulting dozens of women. More information can be found at:
- 30/05/2009**
- February 12, 2014** Bassil da Costa's Murder
- 2019** The police of Rio de Janeiro killed 1,810 people, with an average of five deaths per day.

## Definition of Key Terms

❖ **Disproportionate force**

The use of power exceeds its necessity.

❖ **Military**

People belonging to a country's armed forces.

❖ **Dictatorship**

A government where one leader possesses absolute power.

❖ **Civilians**

Someone who is not in the military, someone who lives a “normal” life.

❖ **Abuse of authority**

Exaggerated and improper use of one individual’s power.

❖ **Protest**

An action expressing disagreement over an event or situation (i.g. The Black Lives Matter protests).

❖ **Inhumane**

Something with absolutely no compassion, completely absurd.

## Further Research

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## Guiding Questions

- ❖ What measures can be taken to promote more safety and freedom for the civilians?
- ❖ How do diverse countries relate to this problem?
- ❖ How can countries improve their policing and safety systems?
- ❖ What are examples of countries who have overcome this issue? How have they done so? Is this a viable solution for my nation?
- ❖ What does the term “disproportionate” mean to my country?

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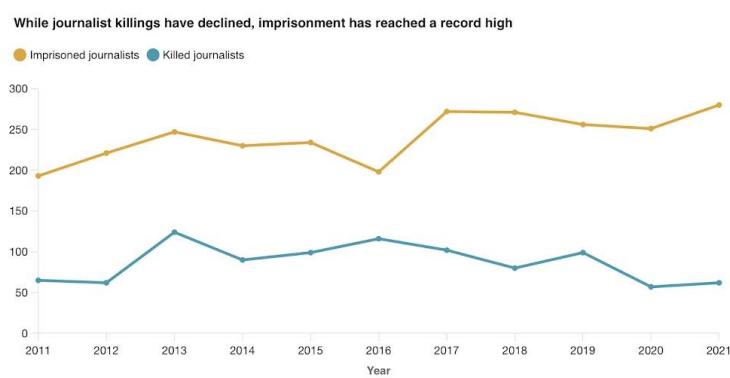
## **Topic B:** **Discussing Journalist Persecution Worldwide**

# Background Information

## Introduction

All around the world, journalists suffer from persecution and have their safety threatened. Journalism is a dangerous profession and within the past few years, the problem at hand has made itself evident. Journalists are at risk whenever pursuing their job, and face persecution, harassment, imprisonment, violence, racism and even death.

Since 2011, the percentage of killed journalists has declined. However, the number of journalists arrested has significantly grown. Not only have there been online attacks, physical attacks and violations also occur and are a concern and put their security at risk. It is also known that female journalists and journalists who are a part of minority groups are being targeted, and further violated.



In this chart, it is clear how in 2016 the number of imprisoned journalists declined. Despite that, in 2017 it significantly worsened. On the other hand, 2013 had the highest rate of killed journalists, as by the chart, the number of killed journalists is slowly decreasing over the years, the number of imprisoned journalists is growing rapidly.

It is important to notice that the countries that most suffer from these extreme violations are Iran, China, and Myanmar.

## History

In recent decades, the world has witnessed a harmful and dramatic growth of journalist persecution. Some professionals say that 2006 was the year with the most journalist violations in history, with approximately 150 deaths and hundreds of others who had been arrested, harmed or violated. At that time, being a journalist was an extremely hard and dangerous profession. One of the most significant examples of this issue was in Iraq, a conflict zone at the time, making it particularly harder for journalists to be there. In Iraq, there were 69 journalists who were killed that year alone, and since the conflict began, over 170 journalists have been killed overall. The majority of those killed were local journalists.



Journalist persecution does not only affect them, it also affects citizens internationally, because without press freedom it is nearly impossible to have security.

## **World Press Freedom Day**

2023 was the 30th year that the World Press Freedom Day was celebrated. This event was created in 1993 and it envisioned being able to permit freedom of media and progress for journalists to be able to work safely. In fact, many countries around the globe have already acquired independent media, therefore enabling the free flow of information. Nonetheless, as stated before, the safety of these professionals is at risk. Simultaneously, society experiences the spread of fake news, impacting institutions and underpinning democracy. The right to freedom of expression is stated in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and links to many other human rights as well.

## **Guillermo Cano World Press day**

This award ceremony was created in 1997 and still exists. The prize recognizes and honors one individual, group, organisation, or institution that has contributed to the promotion and awareness of press freedom all around the globe, especially in places of conflict and danger. The prize was created by the board of members of UNESCO and is conferred by UNESCO.

Guillermo Cano was a Colombian journalist who was murdered in front of his newspaper “El Espectador”’s office in Bogota, on December 17 1986.

This year, The Prize was awarded to three women, Niloofar Hamedi, Elaheh Mohammadi and Narges Mohammadi.



**Niloofar Hamedi:**

A writer at the leading reformist daily newspaper Sargh. She has been imprisoned in solitary confinement since September 2022.

**Elaheh Mohammadi:**

A journalist that covers social issues and gender equality in Sargh. She reported on Masha Amini's funeral and has also been detained since September 2022. In 2020 she was barred from reporting for a year because of her work.

**Narges Mohammadi:**

The vice director of Tehran-based civil society organisation Defenders Human Rights Center. She is now serving a 16 year sentence in prison. Still in prison, she has continued to serve as a journalist, interviewing fellow incarcerated women. She also is the author of the book "White Torture".

## Current Situation

From 2018 to this day, the impunity for the crimes against journalists has decreased by 3%, even though it still remains very high, it is indeed progress. In the year of 2022, The global impunity rate was at 86%, whereas in 2018 it was at 89%. Furthermore, UNESCO data has shown that there is no safe space for journalists, this means that it is not specifically in the workspace, it can really be anywhere. and in 2020-2021, out of the 117 journalists killed, 91 were killed away from their official workspace, which means journalists are not only in danger when working, but also during their daily livelihoods. One of the main examples of that are journalists being killed in their own cars, or even in their own homes, some even were already kidnapped and violated, and some even found dead. Moreover, the situation gets worse when it comes to the journalists' family members, who sometimes also suffer from persecution and have been present while their parents, wives, husbands, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters etc were being killed.

**FIGURE 10:**  
Status of inquiries into killings of journalists in %



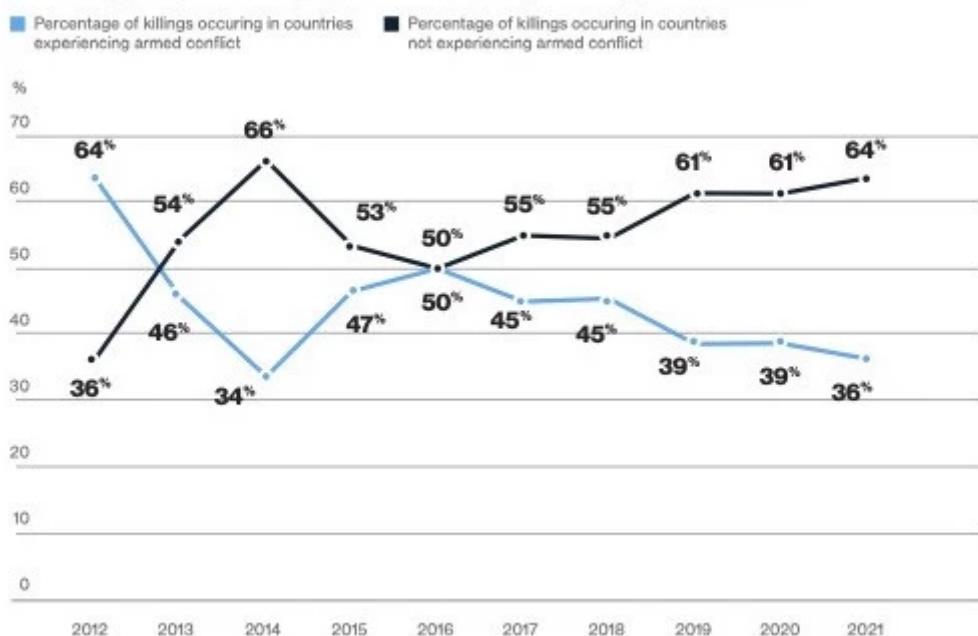
### Female Journalists

In 2021, amongst all journalists, the number of women being killed practically doubled. Before, in 2020, there was a rate of 6% of woman journalists that were killed, while now, it stands at 11%. On the 30th of September of 2022, there was even more evidence that 11% of the killings so far have been happening to women journalists.

## Protests

Covering protests can be extremely dangerous for journalists, due to political, religious and moral conflicts, in the years of 2020 to 2021, 6 journalists were killed. When compared to the years of 2016 and 2017, the rate was significantly lower at 3 journalists, it has been doubled since then.

**FIGURE 3:**  
Percentage of journalist killings in countries experiencing armed conflict



The graph above represents how, since 2016, journalists have become less safe in non conflict countries, as opposed to countries currently experiencing conflict.

## Past UN Actions

The United Nations has taken many measures to help tackle the issue of Journalist persecution, however the most famous of them all is the UN plan of action. This initiative aims to create a safe environment for journalists to pursue their job and to strengthen peace and democracy worldwide. The plan of action focuses specifically on aspects of prevention, protection and prosecution. The plan includes six areas that are extremely important, such as: raising awareness, standard setting and police making, monitoring and reporting, capacity building and research. The UN plan of action also cooperates with the government, media houses, professional associations and NGOs to end impunity. Furthermore, there is also a very important day called the World Press Freedom Day, which is celebrated on May 3rd every year. Not only this, but the Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, is celebrated on November 2nd. Both of these days serve to reflect upon all these crimes happening against journalists worldwide.

# Major Bloc Positions

## Mexico

Mexico, over the last few years, has faced a significant amount of violence against journalists, with many of those who work within the professions having their lives threatened. Mexico is also considered to be one of the most dangerous countries for journalists to work in. Nevertheless, The Mexican government has created a system called The Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Activists and Journalists. Due to this, civilians are able to request that the government take action upon these issues, and therefore protect journalists from any kind of aggression and pertinent life-threatening situations. The Mexican government is intolerant of all aggressions against these professionals and protects their rights.

## China

In China, there is a concern as to how the government deals with this type of violence against journalists. Some journalists believe that the Chinese government does not take this matter seriously and that they do not punish the way they should. In fact, The People's Republic of China is the largest "prison" for journalists in the world. To the government's eyes, the media serves to be the party's mouthpiece, and disseminate its ideas, and if it does not, they can be harassed, tortured or even killed in some cases. Journalists in China MUST download "Study Xi" that can collect their personal data and track them

## Myanmar

In Myanmar, the media is regulated by the law of Myanmar, which makes it possible for the journalists to be unbiased. However, in Myanmar, around 176 journalists have been arrested and four have been killed since February 2021. Furthermore, there is a lot of journalist persecution around this area and many reporters state that they have faced severe torture from the military forces, who state that this is necessary to maintain stability and security for the country.

## **USA**

The United States is eager to make journalists' workspace safer, and to create a free environment for them. They aim to create peace and democracy for these people and to be able to develop themselves. Furthermore, it is prohibited in the US that any type of violence against journalists take place and if it does, people do face consequences.

## **Brazil**

In Brazil, the safety of journalists and freedom of expression is promoted. The government does that by sensitisation and monitoring activities. The government recognizes how awful these situations are and how frequently they happen, therefore, they continue to take action upon it. Brazil's federal constitution guarantees that no information will be biased and that individuals are able to hear news from multiple channels and from multiple views.

## Timeline of Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1974 to 1977</b>	The Diplomatic Conference, held in Geneva, took place. During the Conference, an additional protocol (II) was added to Article 79, stating that “Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians within the meaning of Article 50, paragraph 1 .” (Additional Protocol (II) to the Geneva Conventions).
<b>2006</b>	The year with the most journalist violations in history, with approximately 150 deaths and hundreds of human rights violations.
<b>2012</b>	Record number of journalist murders.
<b>2012</b>	The start of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.
<b>June 29, 2017</b>	OCHRC and UNESCO organised a consultation to review ways of strengthening the UN plan.
<b>November 4, 2022</b>	A global event was organised by the Republic of Austria in celebration of the ten year anniversary of the UN Plan.
<b>2022</b>	Mexico was declared as the most dangerous country for journalists.

## Definition of Key Terms

### ❖ **Censorship**

A individual or group being “prohibited” to disseminate their ideas

### ❖ **Media freedom**

Free dissemination of ideas and points of views with no interference of censorship

### ❖ **Harassment**

Insult, abuse or harm from individual to individual.

### ❖ **Imprisonment**

Someone or something being in captivity or held or even confined.

### ❖ **Impunity**

No punishment for the action taken.

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## Guiding Questions

- ❖ Is there a main reason for journalist persecution worldwide?
- ❖ What actions has my government taken when tackling this dilemma? How do other government's actions compare?
- ❖ What are the consequences of journalist persecution?
- ❖ How can the UN tackle this issue?
- ❖ What other nations have similar views that can support my position in regards to the topic?

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