

Indonesia 2024 Human Rights Report

Executive Summary

There were no significant changes in the human rights situation in Indonesia during the year.

Significant human rights issues included credible reports of: arbitrary or unlawful killings; torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest or detention; serious abuses in a conflict; and serious restrictions on freedom of expression and media freedom, including unjustified arrests or prosecutions of journalists and censorship.

The government did not systematically take credible steps to identify and punish officials who committed human rights abuses.

Violence between government forces and separatist groups continued in the Papua region. There were numerous reports of abuses by nongovernmental groups, including armed groups, against civilians, including unlawful or arbitrary killings, physical abuse, and destruction of property. The government investigated and prosecuted some of these. The violence displaced thousands of residents.

Section 1. Life

a. Extrajudicial Killings

There were numerous reports security officials committed arbitrary or unlawful killings during the year. Many of these reports related to counterinsurgency operations against armed separatist groups in the Papua region, which were also responsible for arbitrary and unlawful killings. The Commission for Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KontraS), a nongovernmental organization (NGO), documented 45 extrajudicial killings by state security forces from December 2023 to November 2024.

In cases of alleged extrajudicial killings by government officials, police and the military often did not conduct investigations. When they did, they failed to disclose their findings. Official statements related to abuse allegations sometimes contradicted NGO accounts, and the inaccessibility of areas where violence took place made confirming facts difficult.

On March 25, media reported the Indonesian Military (TNI) issued an apology and detained 13 soldiers from the 300th Raider Infantry Battalion after videos showing the alleged torture of an ethnic Papuan circulated widely on social media. The TNI stated the victim was a member of a separatist group; Amnesty International reported the victim later died. There was no further information regarding the TNI's investigation.

The use of excessive force by police and the TNI during arrests, interrogations, and detention resulted in deaths.

b. Coercion in Population Control

There were no reports of coerced abortion or involuntary sterilization on the part of government authorities.

c. War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity, and Evidence of Acts that May Constitute Genocide, or Conflict-Related Abuses

The Papua region (Papua, Central Papua, Highland Papua, South Papua, Southwest Papua and West Papua Provinces) was home to separatist movements advocating the creation of an independent state. The most well-known armed separatist group was the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (Free Papua Movement, OPM), which acknowledged carrying out hundreds of attacks on government officials and civilians since the 1970s. The government attempted to suppress these separatist movements primarily through a large military and police presence and through a “special autonomy” status granted to the region in 2002 and revised in 2021. On April 5, the military announced it would no longer officially distinguish between the OPM and other “separatist terrorist groups,” instead referring to all such groups as part of the OPM. Independent government observers

warned this could lead to overly broad targeting of civilians in Papua.

The Europe-based NGO Human Rights Monitor (HRM) reported that on August 21, a member of the Police Mobile Brigade shot an Indigenous Papuan man in Tolikara Regency, Highland Papua Province. Police did not immediately disclose the cause of the shooting and community members and relatives reportedly set tires on fire and blocked all traffic passing through the area. As of September, there was no publicly announced investigation or identification of the police officer involved.

Restrictions on independent press and NGOs in the Papua region and on visits by international investigators made it difficult to determine the authenticity of reports of, or to attribute responsibility for, killings there. The government and separatist groups often provided conflicting accounts concerning responsibility for killings. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, a disaggregated international research NGO, reported clashes in Central Papua Province accounted for the highest fatality numbers across the country, reaching 55 reported deaths from January 1 to October 31. Highland Papua Province had the second highest number of fatalities with 27. Of the reported 116 fatalities throughout the country in the same period, nearly three-quarters of the deaths (85) occurred in the six provinces comprising the Papua region. These figures included all reported killings in connection with political violence, organized violence, demonstrations, and civilian targeting.

Armed separatist groups also killed civilians on multiple occasions. On August 5, the armed wing of the OPM attacked a helicopter carrying medical supplies in Mimika Regency, Central Papua Province, killing the New Zealand-national pilot and releasing the six Indonesian passengers.

The West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB) targeted non-Papuan migrants as well as Indigenous Papuans suspected of working with security forces. In August, media reported TPNPB members killed a non-Papuan worker in Intan Jaya, Central Papua, whom they suspected of providing intelligence to the security forces.

Human rights organizations and media reported security forces in the Papua region often used excessive force and physically abused persons in detention. HRM reported 12 cases of torture attributable to government security forces in the Papua region during the first half of the year. On September 4, relatives of a religious education teacher and local government official named Yeremias Magai found him dead at Siriwini General Hospital in Central Papua. Magai died in the custody of Nabire district police on September 3. Police arrested Magai and an alleged accomplice, Ken Boga, on suspicion of involvement in the killing of a security guard. Officers reportedly subjected both men to severe torture during an interrogation. Boga alleged police used blindfolds, beatings, and heavy tools including a hammer to attempt to extract confessions. Magai's family, unsatisfied with the Nabire police chief's dismissal of the case due to

inconclusive closed-circuit television footage, filed a report with the National Human Rights Commission for further investigation.

Section 2. Liberty

a. Freedom of the Press

The constitution provided for freedom of expression, including for members of the press and other media. The law placed various restrictions on its exercise, including criminal penalties for defamation, hate speech, blasphemy, obscenity, and spreading false information. There were numerous reports of the law being used to limit criticism of the government.

The law criminalized obscenity, hate speech, and speech defaming a person's character or reputation; insulting a religion; spreading false information; or advocating separatism.

The Attorney General's Office had the authority to investigate written material and to request a court order to ban written material. Spreading hate speech or false information was punishable by up to six years in prison.

Language in the law banning obscenity was broadly applied to restrict speech deemed as offending local morals. Blasphemy was punishable for up to five years in prison but was usually prosecuted under the Electronic Information and Transactions law, which was often used to regulate online speech and carried a maximum six-year prison sentence. NGOs reported

this law was also sometimes used to prosecute government critics.

In its August report, *Hate Speech Targeting Vulnerable Groups*, the NGO Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network reported detecting 65 pieces of content containing hate speech and abusive language against vulnerable groups during the February elections. In May, a woman student was summoned by West Nusa Tenggara Regional Police and charged with distributing defamatory content, a violation of the Electronic Information and Transactions law. In March 2023, the student reported a hotel manager to North Lombok Police for sexual harassment. After police determined there was insufficient evidence to pursue the case, she posted her frustrations on Facebook in June 2023.

Although the law generally permitted flying flags symbolizing Papua's cultural identity, a government regulation barring separatism specifically prohibited the display of the Morning Star flag in Papua, the Republic of South Maluku flag in Maluku, and the Free Aceh Movement Crescent Moon flag in Aceh.

Physical Attacks, Imprisonment, and Pressure

Members of the press occasionally faced harassment and threats when investigating cases involving the government, military, police, and business. The Alliance of Independent Journalists recorded 49 incidents involving violations of journalists' and media organizations' rights between January

and September. From January to August, the Alliance of Independent Journalists reported 40 cases of violence against journalists that included doxing, physical assaults, and verbal intimidation and threats perpetrated by various actors, including government officials, police and security personnel, members of mass organizations, and the public. It reported 89 attacks in 2023, the highest number of attacks in a decade.

In March, Jayapura District Court upheld an order to terminate the investigation of a January 2023 bombing outside the home of Papuan journalist Victor Mambor. Mambor reported on human rights abuses in the Papua region, advocated for press freedom, and often criticized government policies. In March, two naval officers visited a journalist in Bacan, North Maluku Province, threatening him over reports regarding the seizure of thousands of liters of fuel owned by regional police. Following an internal investigation, one of the officers was found guilty of intimidating the journalist and was removed from his post; the other was found not guilty.

Censorship by Governments, Military, Intelligence, or Police Forces, Criminal Groups, or Armed Extremist or Rebel Groups

The government sometimes used regional and national regulations, including rules on blasphemy, hate speech, defamation, false information, and separatism, to restrict media. Obtaining permits for travel to the Papua region was difficult for foreign journalists, who reported bureaucratic delays

or denials, ostensibly for safety reasons.

NGOs reported journalistic self-censorship on controversial subjects. Some journalists said they did not report on corruption or highlight conflicts of interests involving political figures. NGO representatives said journalists avoided these subjects due to fear of harassment and professional ostracism.

In July, media reported arsonists burned down the house of a television journalist in Karo, North Sumatra Province, allegedly for the reporter's coverage of gambling, drug smuggling, and illegal logging in the region. The reporter, his wife, his son, age 12, and his grandchild, age three, died as a result of the fire.

On October 16, two unidentified individuals attacked the editorial office of Jujur Bicara Media in Jayapura, Papua, with Molotov cocktails. The resulting fire damaged two of the organization's cars. Acting Papua Governor Ramses Limbong described the attack as an "act of terror" and the regional human rights commission called it a "serious threat" against Papuan journalists.

b. Worker Rights

Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

The law, with restrictions, provided for the rights of workers to join independent unions, conduct legal strikes, and bargain collectively. The law

prohibited antiunion discrimination.

Private-sector workers had broad rights of association and formed and joined unions of their choice without previous authorization or excessive requirements. Although the constitution granted all citizens the right to join any professional organization of their choice, the law placed restrictions on civil servants' right to organize. All were required to join a state-regulated employee association with no right to strike. Efforts to organize other employee associations were rejected on the grounds that the employees were civil servants, not workers. Employees of state-owned enterprises could form unions, but because the government treated most such enterprises as essential national interest entities, their right to strike was limited.

The law stipulated 10 or more workers had the right to form a union, with membership open to all workers, regardless of political affiliation, religion, ethnicity, or sex. The Ministry of Manpower recorded, rather than approved, the formation of a union, federation, or confederation and provided it with a registration number.

The law allowed the government to petition the courts to dissolve a union if it conflicted with the constitution or the national ideology of *Pancasila*, which encompassed the principles of belief in one God, justice, unity, democracy, and social justice. Authorities could compel a union to dissolve if its leaders or members, in the name of the union, committed crimes

against the security of the state, and they could receive a minimum of five years in prison. Once a union was dissolved, its leaders and members could not form another union for at least three years. The International Labor Organization expressed concern that dissolution of a union could be disproportionate to the seriousness of the violation.

The law included restrictions on collective bargaining, including a requirement that a union or unions represent more than 50 percent of the company workforce or receive a vote of more than 50 percent of all workers to negotiate a collective labor agreement. Workers and employers had 30 days to conclude a collective labor agreement. Such agreements had a two-year lifespan that the parties could extend for one year. Unions noted the law allowed employers to delay the negotiation of collective labor agreements with few legal repercussions. The International Labor Organization noted the law allowed the presence of employers in trade unions' voting procedures, which raised concerns of employer interference in union proceedings.

The right to strike was restricted by law. Workers had to give written notification to authorities and the employer seven days in advance for a strike to be legal. Before striking, workers were required to engage in mediation with the employer or risk having the strike declared illegal. In the case of an illegal strike, an employer could make two written requests within a period of seven days for workers to return. Workers who did not return to

work after these requests were considered to have resigned. Unions noted that fulfilling the many legal requirements to strike made striking legally very difficult.

All strikes at “enterprises that cater to the interests of the general public or at enterprises whose activities would endanger the safety of human life if discontinued” were deemed illegal. Regulations did not specify the types of enterprises affected, leaving this determination to the government’s discretion. Presidential and ministerial decrees enabled companies or industrial areas to request assistance from police and the military in the event of disruption of or threat to “national vital objects” in their jurisdiction. The International Labor Organization reported the definition of “national vital objects” imposed overly broad restrictions on legitimate trade union activity, including in export processing zones. Human rights activists and unions alleged the government labeled companies and economic areas as “national vital objects” to justify the use of security forces to restrict strike activity.

Under the law, businesses could hire unlimited outsourced contract labor. Companies could engage contract workers from various outsourcing firms, undermining the ability of workers to negotiate collectively. The law also made contract terms the responsibility of the outsourcing company and allowed firms to offer fewer protections and poorer working conditions to outsourced workers than to direct hire workers. The law set only vague

limits on the use of fixed-term contracts for outsourced workers, which, for example, could be used for any work that was “temporary” in nature or could be completed in “not too long a time.” Implementing regulations increased the maximum duration of fixed contracts from three to 10 years and did not limit their renewal. The law, moreover, did not provide adequate protection against nonrenewal of a contract for antiunion reasons and dissolved previous legal requirements for written contracts.

The government did not effectively enforce provisions of the law protecting freedom of association or preventing antiunion discrimination. Bribery and judicial corruption in workers’ disputes occurred, resulting in unfavorable results for workers. While workers sometimes received severance pay or other compensation, they were rarely reinstated.

Penalties for criminal violations of the law protecting freedom of association and the right to enter into collective labor agreements included a prison sentence and fines. Penalties were generally commensurate with similar crimes but were rarely applied against violators. Enforcement of collective bargaining agreements varied based on the capacity and interest of individual regional governments.

Several common practices undermined freedom of association. Antiunion intimidation most often took the form of termination, transfer, or filing of unjustified criminal charges. Unions alleged employers commonly reassigned labor leaders deemed to be problematic. Labor activists claimed

companies orchestrated the formation of multiple unions, including “yellow” (employer-controlled) unions, to weaken legitimate unions. Some employers threatened employees who contacted union organizers. Companies often sued union leaders for losses suffered in strikes.

Many strikes were unsanctioned, occurring after a failure to settle long-term grievances or when an employer refused to recognize a union. Unions reported employers also used the bureaucratic process required for a legal strike to obstruct unions’ right to strike. Unions noted employers’ delays in negotiating collective labor agreements contributed to strike activity and legal measures taken against union members in the event of a failed agreement negotiation.

Forced or Compulsory Labor

See the Department of State’s annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

Acceptable Work Conditions

Wage and Hour Laws

Minimum wages varied throughout the country as provincial governors had authority to set a minimum wage floor and district heads had authority to set a higher rate. The minimum wage in 11 of 38 provinces was below the national poverty income level.

Most workers were not covered by the minimum wage laws. Government regulations exempted employers in certain sectors, including small and medium enterprises and labor-intensive industries such as textiles, from minimum wage requirements. Guidelines based the minimum wage on economic conditions, with purchasing power parity, manpower absorption levels, and median wage as key variables in the calculation. The implementing regulations required sectors exempt from minimum wage rules to pay workers at least 50 percent of average public consumption or 25 percent above the poverty level in their province and made part-time workers eligible for hourly wages.

For certain sectors, the overtime rate for work more than a 40-hour workweek was 1.5 times the normal hourly rate for the first hour and twice the hourly rate for additional overtime, with a maximum of four hours of overtime per day and a maximum of 18 hours per week. The law allowed certain businesses and jobs to be exempt from the 40-hour workweek, including those in the energy, agriculture, and fisheries sectors.

Occupational Safety and Health

The law required most employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace; however, workers in the informal sector were not covered, including domestic workers. Inspectors did not actively identify unsafe conditions as their capacity to conduct inspections was limited by resources and training. Industry sources reported labor inspectors were often bribed to underreport

or completely omit occupational safety and health (OSH) violations from their inspection reports.

Workers could remove themselves from situations that endangered health or safety without jeopardy to their employment.

On June 13, an explosion at PT Indonesia Tsingshan Stainless Steel injured two workers. The National Industrial Workers Union Federation criticized the accident, demanding a thorough investigation and medical coverage for the injured workers. NGOs subsequently urged revisions to safety laws and stronger cooperation among the government, employers, and unions to enhance occupational safety standards in the rapidly expanding nickel industry. This was the second smelter explosion at the plant in six months, with the previous explosion killing 21 workers in December 2023. Unions urged the government, especially the Ministry of Manpower, to do more to address the country's poor worker safety record and lax enforcement of health and safety regulations, particularly in the construction sector. The government sometimes responded to workers' OSH complaints.

Wage, Hour, and OSH Enforcement

Authorities enforced labor regulations, including minimum wage regulations, only for workers in the formal sector. Local officials from the Ministry of Manpower were responsible for enforcing minimum wage, work hours, and OSH regulations. Penalties for violations included fines and

imprisonment (for violation of the minimum wage law) and were generally commensurate with those for similar crimes. Government enforcement was inadequate, particularly at smaller companies and in foreign-owned enterprises, such as Chinese-owned smelting sites, where reports of unsafe working conditions and concerns regarding wage payments were prevalent. Penalties were rarely applied even when violators were identified. Provincial and local officials often did not have the technical expertise needed to enforce labor laws effectively and were often bribed not to enforce laws. Inspectors had the authority to make unannounced inspections and could initiate sanctions in the formal sector. The number of inspectors employed by the Ministry of Manpower was inadequate to enforce compliance.

Workers in the informal sector, an estimated 59 percent of the labor force, did not receive the same protections or benefits as workers in the formal sector, in part because they had no legal work contract that labor inspectors could examine.

The law did not mandate that employers provide domestic workers, who were considered part of the informal workforce, with a minimum wage, health insurance, freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, an eight-hour workday, a weekly day of rest, vacation time, or safe work conditions.

c. Disappearance and Abduction

Disappearance

There were no reports of enforced disappearances by or on behalf of government authorities. The government and NGOs reported little progress in accounting for previous disappearances, including those during the country's occupation of Timor-Leste, which became independent in 2002. NGOs noted many officials suspected of involvement in disappearances served in the government.

Prolonged Detention without Charges

There were reports of arbitrary arrests by police, primarily by the Criminal Investigation Department and the Mobile Brigade Corps, a police tactical unit tasked with counterterrorism, riot control, and high-risk law enforcement. There were multiple media and NGO reports of police temporarily detaining persons for criticizing the government, participating in peaceful demonstrations, other nonviolent activities, and property disputes. Reports of arbitrary arrest occurred across the country, but especially in the Papua region. Most of those detained in such cases were released within 24 hours.

In August, police reportedly detained 32 vocational high school and college students in Semarang, Central Java Province, following demonstrations at

the city legislature. President Joko Widodo and the National Commission on Human Rights publicly urged police to release the demonstrators in Semarang and those elsewhere in the country who were protesting controversial legislation related to regional elections. The commission also urged regional police to evaluate the handling of demonstrations given reports of police violence.

Media reported cases in which suspects were detained longer than allowed by law, in some cases – especially of low-level crimes with sentences less than a year – resulting in immediate release of persons found guilty because the time served in pretrial detention equaled or exceeded their sentence (time in pretrial detention counted against the sentence). Terrorism suspects were governed by special rules. The government did not report the number of individuals in pretrial detention.

d. Violations in Religious Freedom

See the Department of State's annual *International Religious Freedom Report* at <https://www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/>.

e. Trafficking in Persons

See the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

Section 3. Security of the Person

a. Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The constitution prohibited such practices. The law criminalized the use of violence or force by officials to elicit a confession, but no law specified or defined torture. Other laws, such as on witness and victim protection, included antitorture provisions. Officials faced imprisonment for a maximum of four years if they used violence or force illegally.

NGOs made numerous reports of police and security forces using excessive force during detention and interrogation. From July 2023 to June 2024, KontraS documented 645 incidents of police violence and 75 civil liberty violations, including forced dispersals, arbitrary arrests, and intimidation. KontraS reported that between June 2023 and May 2024, there were 60 cases of torture nationally. This included 40 instances committed by police, 14 by the military, and six involving prison guards.

Police and the military usually upheld procedures to address alleged torture. In cases of alleged torture and other abuse, police and the military typically conducted investigations but often did not publicly disclose either the fact or the findings of these internal investigations. Official statements related to abuse allegations sometimes contradicted NGO accounts, and the

frequent inaccessibility of areas where violence took place made confirming facts difficult. NGOs and other observers criticized the short prison sentences often imposed by military courts in abuse cases involving civilian victims or actions by off-duty soldiers.

Aceh Province had special authority to implement sharia regulations. Authorities there carried out public canings for violations of sharia in cases of sexual abuse, gambling, adultery, alcohol consumption, and sexual relations outside of marriage. Sharia was not, by regulation, to be applied to non-Muslims, foreigners, or Muslims not resident in Aceh; however, it sometimes was. Non-Muslims in Aceh occasionally chose punishment under sharia because it was more expeditious and less expensive than secular procedures.

Canings occurred in public spaces despite an order from the governor restricting them to prison facilities. Individuals sentenced to caning could receive up to 100 lashes for each crime, depending on the crime and prison time served. Five caning cases were reported in Aceh from January to October, including the September caning in one case of nine individuals who served 39 days in prison and received seven lashes for online gambling.

According to *Metro Online*, a news site, on May 22, a member of the security forces allegedly assaulted Michail Pasaribu, a resident of Medan, North Sumatra. The incident reportedly took place during a routine patrol, where Michail was stopped and questioned. The situation escalated,

leading to the officer's alleged assault on Michail. There was no reported investigation.

Security force impunity was a problem. Senior politicians remarked publicly that the actions of the army special forces' Rose Team, involved in the kidnapping, torture, and killing of students in 1997-98, did not amount to human rights abuses. Human rights organizations expressed concern that individuals implicated in these abuses were in senior government positions.

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) occurred regularly; 55 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 64 acknowledged being circumcised, according to an August 2023 report from the UN Population Fund; 1.3 million girls were cut every year; the country accounted for 30 percent of girls at risk globally. No national law enforced FGM/C prevention, and although the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection led official efforts to discourage the practice, it continued.

b. Protection of Children

Child Labor

See the Department of Labor's *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/findings/>.

Child Marriage

The legal minimum marriage age was 21, or 19 with parental permission. Exceptions to the minimum age requirements were allowed with court approval. The courts officially permitted more than 50,000 child marriages in 2022, down from 59,000 in 2021, with approximately one-third due to pregnancy.

The main drivers of early marriage were poverty, cultural tradition, religious norms, and lack of sexual reproductive health education. The National Commission on Violence against Women reported that some of these child marriages involved the victims of sexual abuse marrying their abusers.

c. Protection to Refugees

The government cooperated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, returning refugees, or asylum seekers, as well as other persons of concern.

Provision of First Asylum

UNHCR officials reported 11,986 refugees and asylum seekers in the country as of October. Most refugees were from Afghanistan and originally arrived in or before 2014. The country did not allow permanent local settlement or naturalization of asylum seekers or persons judged to be refugees. The

government allowed refugees to settle temporarily while awaiting permanent resettlement. The law acknowledged UNHCR's role in processing all refugee status determinations in the country. Regulations established a detailed refugee management process, outlining the specific responsibilities of national and subnational agencies from the time of refugee arrival to departure for resettlement or repatriation. UNHCR reported 542 refugees departed for resettlement through July. In August refugees rallied in front of UNHCR offices in Jakarta calling for either citizenship or resettlement to another country.

d. Acts of Antisemitism and Antisemitic Incitement

The country's Jewish population was extremely small, estimated at approximately 200. Studies indicated a high level of antisemitic sentiment, often linked with strong pro-Palestine and anti-Israel sentiment.

In July, media reported political and religious figures condemned the visit of five members of the Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama to Israel as part of an interfaith initiative and their meeting Israeli President Isaac Herzog during the Gaza war.

Demonstrations against Israel were common following the onset of the war in Gaza in October 2023 and included a few examples of high-profile antisemitic statements.