



AI Group 48 Portland, Oregon

July 2026 Newsletter

Next Meeting July 9th on Zoom



Urgent Action: Colombia Attacks Against Women Searchers Must be Investigated

On June 8, Cleiner Almanza was coerced into meeting with unknown individuals in an isolated area of Cartagena, where she was attacked, tortured, subjected to gender-based violence, and nearly killed. Cleiner is a woman searching for her brother, who was forcibly disappeared in 1998 in the Montes de María region, in northern Colombia. She is also a recognized human rights defender, particularly of women's rights, and has previously been attacked and her human rights violated because of her work.

Call on the Attorney General's Office to fulfill its commitment to women searchers by conducting a prompt, thorough, and effective investigation into the crimes committed against Cleiner Almanza.

Take Action [here](#):

Urgent Action: France • Activist at Risk of Deportation

On April 30, French authorities initiated deportation proceedings against Ramy Shaath, a Palestinian activist, placing him at risk of forcible removal from France. Authorities have stated that his presence in France constitutes a “serious threat to public order”. The conclusions appear to be based on his involvement with civil society organizations and statements he made in several protests. However, he has never been convicted or charged for any of these acts. Ramy Shaath has lived in France with his wife and young daughter since 2022. France would breach the principle of non-refoulement if authorities remove him to a place where he would be at real risk of serious human rights violations. Deportation would also result in separating him from his family in France. The French authorities must immediately halt the deportation proceedings against Ramy Shaath and ensure that he remains in France with a secure legal status and without fear of reprisals.

Ramy Shaath, 55, is a Palestinian activist who is facing deportation proceedings in France on the grounds that he poses a “serious threat to public order”. He is currently living in France with his wife, a French citizen, and their young daughter. He has been without a valid residence permit in France since September 2023, following difficulties in the renewal of his initial temporary status. He has since been engaged in ongoing administrative and legal efforts to regularize his immigration status.

The deportation proceedings against Ramy Shaath were initiated on April 30 by the Prefecture of Hauts-de-Seine in Nanterre, the departmental authority responsible for immigration and residence matters within its jurisdiction on the grounds that his public expression, political activism, and association with several organizations and collectives on Palestine allegedly posed a threat to public order. No criminal charges have been brought against him in relation to these allegations.

On May 21, the Hauts-de-Seine departmental deportation commission issued a formal opinion opposing his removal. The commission concluded that in the absence of any criminal conviction or a clear abuse of the right to freedom of expression, Ramy Shaath's statements do not constitute a threat to public order. Further, it stated that his expulsion would constitute a disproportionate interference with his right to family life and the best interests of his French-citizen daughter. However, the commission's opinion is advisory and not binding on the French authorities, who retain the power to proceed with the deportation decision. While no deportation order has yet been issued, the proceedings remain ongoing. As no final deportation decision has been taken, Ramy Shaath is currently unable to challenge the measure before



the courts. Until the authorities either formally discontinue the proceedings or issue a deportation order, Ramy Shaath continues to face uncertainty regarding his ability to remain in France with his family.

Since the start of Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza in October 2023, Amnesty International has documented multiple incidents of restrictions on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly across several European countries. This has included restrictions on demonstrations, policing measures targeting public assemblies, and the cancelation, prohibition, or disruption of events and discussions related to Palestine.

Ramy Shaath was a co-founder of the Egyptian chapter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, a campaign advocating boycotts, divestment, and sanctions in support of the rights of Palestinians, and has been active in political and rights-based advocacy in Egypt. His activism has led to him being targeted by the Egyptian authorities. In July 2019, the police arrested him at his home in Cairo without a warrant. Amnesty International at the time described him as a prisoner of conscience and called for his immediate and unconditional release, stating that his detention was solely linked to the exercise of his right to freedom of expression. He was released in January 2022 after more than 900 days in detention, following sustained international pressure. His release was conditioned on the renunciation of his Egyptian citizenship, after which he relocated to France and reunited with his wife.

Sample Letter

Dear President Macron,

I am deeply concerned about the deportation proceedings against Palestinian activist Ramy Shaath, following a decision by the Nanterre prefecture that stated his presence in France constitutes a "serious threat to public order".

Ramy Shaath is a well-known activist who was arbitrarily detained in Egypt from 2019 to 2022 before being released and relocated to France. Continuation of the deportation proceedings would be a disproportionate restriction of his right to freedom of expression and incompatible with France's human rights obligations.

Deporting him may also breach the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits states from transferring people to a place where they would face a real risk of serious human rights violations or other irreparable harm, such as persecution, or torture and other

cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. In addition, such a measure would constitute a disproportionate interference with his right to private and family life, given his established family life in France.

I urge you to immediately halt the deportation proceedings against Ramy Shaath, and to ensure that he remains in France with secure legal status with his family in safety and dignity and without fear of reprisals.

Yours sincerely,

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- Click [here](#) to report your action(s) on UA 62.26. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Mr. President of the French Republic
Palais de l'Élysée
55 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
75008 Paris, France
Email: <https://www.elysee.fr/ecrire-au-president-de-la-republique/#epr-form>

Send a copy of your letter to:

Ambassador Laurent Bili
French Embassy
4101 Reservoir Road NW
Washington, DC 20007
Email: <https://us.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/contact> (Directions: Enter your state on the first page and limit your message to 1500 characters or less)

Please take action until December 10, 2026

Sudan: RSF Atrocities in El Fasher ‘A Stain on the Conscience of Humanity’ - New Report

June 30th, 2026 The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing during its campaign to seize El Fasher in North Darfur state in Sudan, Amnesty International concluded in a major new report. The organization is now calling for an immediate ceasefire in Sudan, and for the urgent deployment of an international force to protect civilians.

[‘City Under Siege, Children Under Fire’: Rapid Support Forces’ Crimes Against Humanity in North Darfur](#) documents how civilians in and around El Fasher were killed, injured, beaten, tortured and detained between early 2024 and October 2025 as the RSF fought the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and allied Joint Forces in a war that devastated North Darfur. The RSF’s crimes included murder, forcible transfer, imprisonment, torture, rape, sexual slavery, other forms of sexual violence, enslavement, extermination and persecution.

Hundreds of thousands of children have been displaced, many of them repeatedly risking death and injury during attacks or while fleeing. Countless have been orphaned. People with disabilities and older people have faced acute risks, including targeted attacks, abandonment, and exclusion from essential assistance.

Throughout assaults on North Darfur, the RSF routinely used terms like *falangay*, indicating slavery or servitude, during attacks on civilians of non-Arab ethnicity.

“The war in Sudan is a war on civilians. The world was warned of the horrors that civilians in El Fasher confronted as the RSF laid siege to the city. It is a stain on the conscience of humanity,” said Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International’s Secretary General.

“Children were not collateral damage of this violence – often, they were deliberately targeted and have suffered immensely. They have been killed, injured, raped, abducted, and forcibly recruited on a massive scale.

“A nationwide ceasefire is immediately needed. An independent and adequately resourced international force must be deployed to Sudan to protect civilians against crimes by all parties to the conflict. Without urgent action from the international community, attacks on civilians – and the immense suffering and trauma being inflicted on children – will continue unhindered.”

Amnesty International interviewed 247 people for the report, including 208 survivors (169 adults and 39 children) who experienced or witnessed conflict-re-

lated abuses. The report also contains open-source analysis, including 89 videos and extensive analysis of satellite imagery from North Darfur.

On June 10, 2026, Amnesty International sent a letter to General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, head of the RSF, documenting the report’s findings. At the time of publication, no response had been received.

Analysis of evidence gathered within the geographic and temporal scope under examination in this report allows for the conclusion – without qualification – of persecution based on ethnic identity. Amnesty International believes that acts documented in this report, as well as other suspected crimes under parallel investigation, may be relevant to the crime of genocide. Its investigation into this conduct is ongoing at the time of publication.

By November 2023, the RSF controlled four out of five state capitals in Darfur. El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, was the lone holdout. Beginning in 2024, the RSF systematically attacked the villages, towns, and displacement camps surrounding El Fasher, targeting residents with violence and pillaging, and burning civilian infrastructure.

Many of these communities were predominantly from the Zaghawa ethnic group. During attacks, RSF fighters burned civilian homes long after residents had fled, suggesting an intent to render the areas uninhabitable. These actions, combined with the RSF’s continued control of these areas, preventing displaced populations from returning, are consistent with the ethnic cleansing of the Zaghawa people from areas near El Fasher.

Yagoub*, a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy, was at his family farm near Abu Zerega, a town 35km south of El Fasher, when the RSF attacked in December 2024. He tried to flee but was captured by the RSF. He told Amnesty International: “They tied me up and beat me with sticks and the back of an AK-47. Then one of them approached on a camel and said, ‘This is the child of a *falangay*’... And he just shot me in the leg.”

Yagoub now uses crutches to walk. Eight of his cousins, including four boys aged between 11 and 17, were killed in the same attack.

With residents forcibly displaced from the villages around El Fasher, the RSF maintained a brutal siege on the city from May 2024 to October 2025, restricting the entry of food and humanitarian supplies, and shelling the city on a near-daily basis. Famine spread, forcing people to eat *ambaz*, a byproduct of peanut oil

production normally used as animal feed. All civilians, but particularly children – on whom disease and malnutrition can have irreversible effects – bore the brunt of this manufactured famine.

Women described giving birth amid severe deprivation and stress: in sweltering underground bomb shelters, in hospitals that were shelled or while fleeing violence. Unable to get adequate nutrition themselves, they often could not produce enough milk to feed their newborns. With no safe alternatives, many women watched their babies waste away.

Rashida*, a 39-year-old woman, lost her youngest child, a one-year-old twin in August 2025. She said:

“[My son] was getting very weak [and] not taking milk. He became very thin.”

On October 26, 2025, the RSF waged its final offensive on El Fasher. When civilians attempted to flee, they encountered a 57km network of berms opens in a new tab. A massacre followed: hundreds were executed, and many others were tortured or detained.

Amnesty International interviewed 70 survivors, almost all of whom witnessed executions, rape, other torture or hostage-taking. One 58-year-old woman estimated she saw more than 1,000 dead bodies: “The people who were shot were thrown inside the berm... [The RSF] said they would fill in the berm with the bodies.”

Many children were among those killed at the berm. Taiseer*, a 68-year-old Zaghawa woman fleeing with her five grandchildren, saw the RSF shoot and kill a 12-year-old boy who was accompanying them.

Zubeida*, a 15-year-old girl, survived a massacre of approximately 25 people at the berm only because she identified herself as half Arab and falsely claimed that her father was in the RSF. She witnessed the execution of men and boys, the killing of women who resisted rape, and the shooting of young children. She said: “I am the only survivor.”

Those who remained in El Fasher witnessed horrific violations. Amnesty International interviewed 18 people who were present at Saudi Maternity Hospital,

including staff, patients and relatives of patients, who saw the RSF kill scores of people there. Attacking the Saudi Maternity Hospital, a protected object under international law, is a war crime.

The RSF raped and committed other forms of sexual violence on a massive scale across many settings. Amnesty International interviewed 26 survivors of sexual violence, including 20 female survivors of rape, among them three girls under the age of 18 and one young woman raped when she was 17. Survivors described being subjected to severe humiliation and abuse that left lasting physical and psychological harm.

Tasneem*, a 13-year-old Zaghawa girl, was abducted in early April 2025 when RSF fighters attacked her village west of El Fasher. Tasneem was herding the family's live-stock with her father when RSF fighters approached. Tasneem watched the RSF shoot her father dead, before she was abducted and transported to El Daein, approximately 350km away.

She told Amnesty International: “[The first time I was raped] it was three people. I was blindfolded... They held me down... They said this is happening to you because your boys fought us, boys of the falangayat.”

The RSF also unlawfully detained civilians and held many of them hostage for ransom, often in horrific conditions. Amnesty International interviewed 45 people who were unlawfully detained by the RSF, including eight children, between July 2024 and January 2026.

Detention conditions were abusive and degrading. Interviewees, including boys as young as 13, said they were beaten and verbally abused with ethnic slurs by RSF soldiers while in captivity. They were denied adequate food and water, and kept in sweltering, overcrowded rooms. Illness spread: many detainees witnessed dozens, and sometimes hundreds, of people dying from dehydration or disease.

Amnesty International interviewed nine men who were held in Mina al-Bari detention center, on the



eastern outskirts of El Fasher, for periods of up to five months between mid-2024 and early 2026. They said they were detained in shipping containers, which were kept closed most of the time. The stifling heat and minimal air circulation made it difficult to breathe.

One man who was held there said: “You cannot stretch your legs... You cannot sleep long... [The RSF] told me, ‘We don’t care if you die.’”

Another man who was held at Mina al-Bari described being deprived of food and water: “My body was [drying out] completely, other people as well as myself lost consciousness. [The RSF] thought we had died so they just threw us out of the container. After a while, they realized we were still alive. They tortured us again and took us [back] inside the container.”

Amnesty International also documented widespread RSF recruitment and use of boys, either from aligned Arab ethnic groups or abducted from non-Arab groups during attacks on villages and displacement camps. They performed different roles for the group, including fighting, gathering intelligence, and herding livestock.

Rashid* was abducted by the RSF from his village around July 2024, aged approximately 17. For nearly nine months, he was kept in a rural area and forced to herd goats. He was guarded by three armed boys, themselves RSF recruits, who subjected him and other detainees to humiliation and beatings, and deprived him of food and water. He said: “They would watch me, and if I tried to rest, they would open fire on me... They beat me all over my body.”

Amnesty International identified RSF commanders responsible for serious violations of international law.

RSF members filmed and publicly shared videos of mass executions. Amnesty International collected and verified 19 videos documenting one large massacre near the berm, about 12km north-west of El Fasher. Nine of these videos show RSF commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris, more widely known as ‘Abu Lulu’ opens in a new tab, executing captives who are wearing civilian clothing.

Senior RSF commanders at the Mina al-Bari detention facility included Major General Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed (‘Abu Shouk’), who directed interrogations and participated in torture, and Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater Bakhit, who was seen ordering the torture of prisoners and facilitating payments.

These violations happened repeatedly and on a large scale, suggesting that those in positions of authority knew, or should have known, what was occurring, and failed to stop it or hold anyone accountable.



“The international community must move beyond statements of concern and take concrete steps to protect civilians, breaking the cycle of impunity,” said Agnès Callamard.

“Sudan has been reeling from the impact of humanitarian funding cuts opens in a new tab, which deepened an already catastrophic human rights crisis for communities that have lost everything. All of Sudan’s international partners must ensure that adequate aid reaches refugees and displaced persons, including child-focused services, to help quell the crisis.

“It also requires strengthening accountability by ensuring sufficient support for all existing accountability mechanisms for Sudan, including the International Criminal Court, and UN and African Union-backed fact-finding missions. Commanders identified in this report should be investigated and, where there is sufficient admissible evidence, prosecuted.”

All countries must immediately stop providing arms and ammunition opens in a new tab to all parties of the Sudan conflict. In particular, all countries must stop providing the UAE – the RSF’s chief backer – with any arms until it can be brought into compliance with the UN embargo. The UN Security Council must also expand the existing arms embargo on Darfur to the rest of the country.

*Names have been changed.

Self-Immolation of Tibetan Man Outside UN Highlights Long-Standing Chinese Repression

July 3rd, 2026--Responding to reports of the death of a Tibetan man following an apparent act of self-immolation outside the United Nations headquarters in New York, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director Sarah Brooks said:

"Our thoughts are with everyone who knew and loved the man who has died and the broader Tibetan community. Self-immolation as protest by Tibetans has persisted for many years, and it does not happen in a vacuum. It reflects the depth of desperation felt by people who see no other way to draw attention to ongoing human rights violations.

"This death comes just a day after China's Ethnic Unity Law entered into force, a law that brazenly pushes non-Han ethnic groups including Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongolians toward a single, state-defined national identity rather than protecting their distinct cultures and languages.

"This tragedy is a moment for all to reflect on the human cost of these policies: for the Chinese authorities to end their repressive policies in Tibet, including those entrenched by the Ethnic Unity Law, and for other governments to recognize the Law for the dangerous tool of repression that it is.

"The international community must not allow this death to pass without renewed scrutiny of the human rights crisis in Tibet. Chinese authorities must end their repression of Tibetans and allow independent access to the region for UN experts and other independent observers. They must also ensure there are no government reprisals against the family of the man who died, as has happened previously in response to self-immolations by Tibetans."

According to media reports and Tibetan organizations, a 52-year-old Tibetan man named Lobga Rangzen (also known as Lobsang Palden) died after an apparent act of self-immolation outside the United Nations headquarters in New York on July 2, 2026. Described as a Tibetan activist, he was reportedly carrying a Tibetan flag and calling for freedom for Tibet before setting himself on fire.

Amnesty International has documented decades of human rights violations against Tibetans, including severe restrictions on freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and cultural rights. Tibetans continue to face pervasive surveillance, arbitrary detention, restrictions on the use of the Tibetan language and the criminalization of peaceful expressions of Tibetan identity.

On July 1, 2026, China's new Ethnic Unity Law opens in a new tab entered into force. Amnesty International warned that the law would further institutionalize policies of forced assimilation targeting Tibetans, Uyghurs and other non-Han ethnic groups, and could strengthen the legal basis for transnational repression, targeting and violating fundamental freedoms of those peacefully advocating for minority rights outside China.

Amnesty International has repeatedly called on the Chinese authorities to end policies that violate the human rights of Tibetans, in concert with Tibetan advocacy groups and with UN experts, and will continue to urge China to grant meaningful and unfettered access to Tibet for UN experts and other independent observers.



Urgent Action: United Arab Emirates Sudanese Political Activist Detained in UAE

Mohammed Farouk Salman Mahmoud is a Sudanese political activist and transitional justice advocate who has been detained in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) since January 19, 2025. He moved to the UAE in early 2023. On January 19, 2025, while at Dubai Airport preparing to board a flight out of the UAE, he was arrested by Emirati security officials and taken to his house where they searched his belongings and confiscated his devices before detaining him at an undisclosed location. At the time of his detention, he was recovering from a major surgical procedure, raising significant concerns regarding his health and well-being. In April 2025, the UAE authorities claimed he was being investigated for insulting the head of the UAE state. He is currently detained at the Al Sadr Prison in Abu Dhabi.

Urge the UAE authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Mohammed Farouk Salman Mahmoud. Take action [here](#):

China: New 'ethnic unity' law set to entrench assimilation of minority groups

June 30th, 2026 Responding to China's new Ethnic Unity Law coming into force on 1 July, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director Sarah Brooks said:

"Chinese authorities have human rights obligations requiring them to protect minority communities and their cultures, but this law does the opposite. Rather than celebrating difference, it is about pushing ethnic groups such as Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Mongolians to adopt a single, state-defined national identity dominated by Han Chinese culture.

"Unity' in this context is not harmony between different communities — it is political and ideological alignment with the Chinese Communist Party. Rather than protecting diversity and equality, the law requires conformity.

"Chinese authorities' stated intention to apply elements of this law beyond China's borders is also deeply concerning. This law risks providing a stronger legal basis for existing practices of transnational repression — peaceful advocacy for minority rights in China by anyone, anywhere could be characterized as undermining 'ethnic unity'.

"Meanwhile, activities which already carry great risk within China – such as promoting minority languages, documenting human rights abuses, or campaigning for the release of those detained because of their expression of culture, opinion or belief – could be further criminalized.

"This law puts a national legal framework behind

policies that have already devastated the rights of Uyghurs, Tibetans and other non-Han ethnic groups. We expect it to further institutionalize China's policies of forced assimilation."

China's Ethnic Unity Law will come into force on 1 July 2026. The law frames "ethnic unity" as a pre-condition for ambitious projects of the Chinese Communist Party leadership, including the advancement of Xi Jinping Thought, and the "rejuvenation" of a shared national political identity.

The law, for example, prohibits acts that "undermine ethnic unity or create ethnic division," but these terms are broad and undefined, raising concerns about arbitrary enforcement.

During a 24 June State Council press conference, senior officials confirmed that authorities consider aspects of

the law applicable beyond China's borders.

Amnesty International has previously documented China's use of transnational repression, including surveillance of diaspora communities, harassment of critics overseas, intimidation of family members in China, and efforts to pressure foreign governments to return individuals.

Cases such as those of Uyghur academic Ilham Tohti, Uyghur ethnographer Rahile Dawut, and Tibetan religious leader Choktrul Dorje Ten Rinpoche, illustrate how peaceful academic, cultural, and religious work has been criminalized under existing policies — trends this law risks further entrenching.



Group Coordinators

Marty Fromer and Terrie Rodello

Newsletter -- Daniel Webb

OR Area Coordinator -- Marty Fromer

Indonesia actions -- Max White

China / Uyghur actions -- Marty Fromer

Central Africa/ Oregon State Death

Penalty Abolition-- Terrie Rodello

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