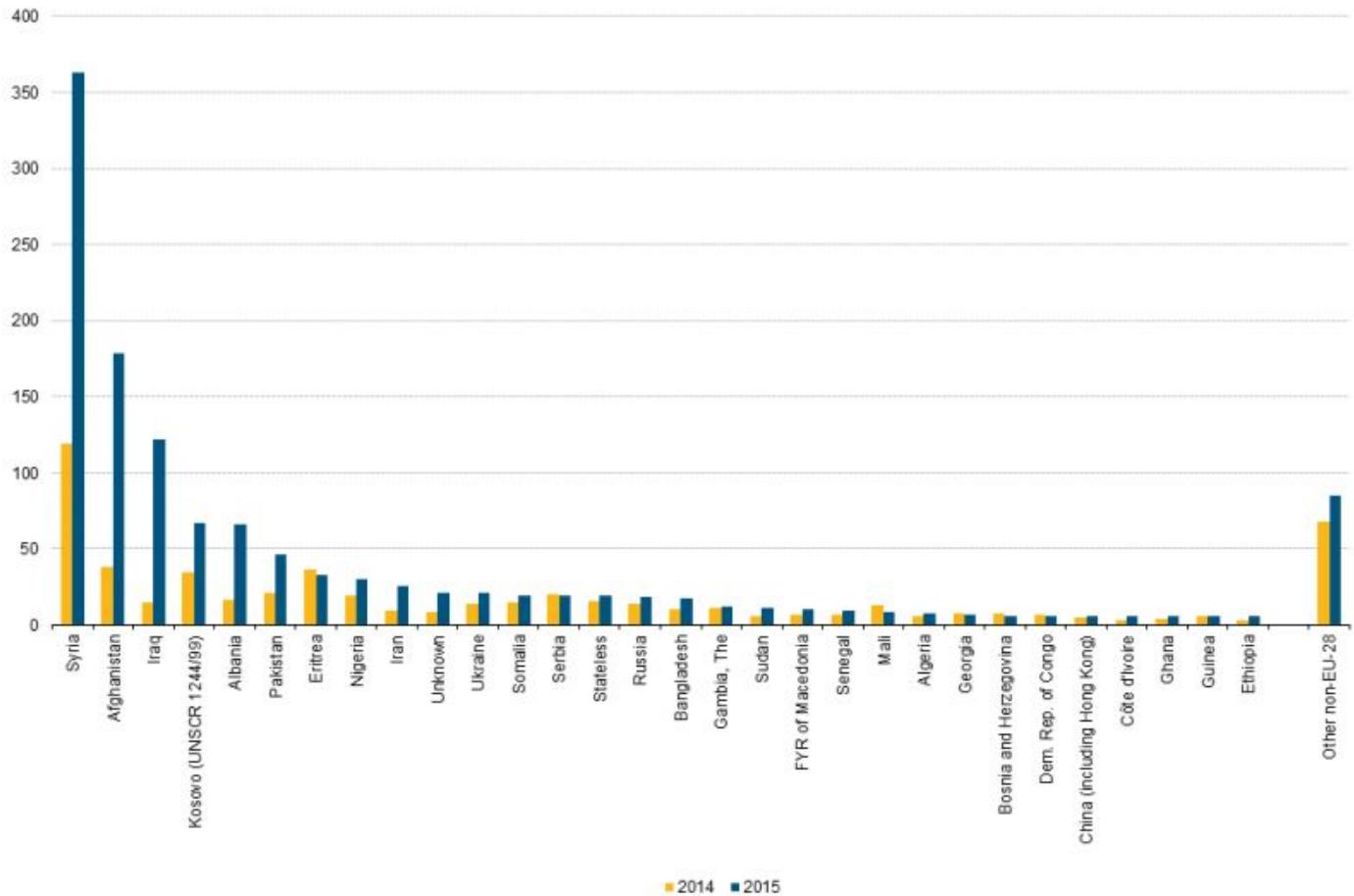


# Human Rights Issues in Middle East and East Asia

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Human rights is the indispensable rights of every human being. Since the day a person is born, he/she has human rights. Freedom of religion, press, protest, expressions and etc are considered as human rights. As a human being, no matter the race, faith, or ethnic group such person belongs to, human rights has to be guaranteed. However, in certain countries, notably in Middle East area, human rights violations are not rare. Deprivation of human rights are mostly carried out by government through creating rules that forbidden certain minorities to have the same privilege as others. In some countries, not only minorities, everyone suffers human rights violation. They can't practice their religion, speak their native language, protest or publish their paper without government approval. However, we can not deny that there are lots of improvement of human rights protection in those countries with the help of UN and NGOs.

Fortunately, most of the countries in the world has written law about protecting human rights. United States, for instance, has freedom of speech, religion, assembly, protest, press, vote for all race and gender, and etc. Countries that are strongly committed to human rights protection have millions of refugees and asylum seekers who fled from their hometown to seek for protection. Within 2013, 2014 and 2015, amount of asylum application in EU and EFTA member states are 431,000, 627,000 and 1,300,000 respectively and this numbers is expecting to rise in the future. Additionally, countries of origin of asylum seekers are largely in Middle East area.



*Countries of origin of (non-EU) asylum seekers in the EU-28 Member States, 2014 and 2015*

Such surprising amount of rising of asylum seekers shows us how many people are suffering from human rights violation around the globe. A question might follow-up with this statement, who and what deprive human rights of millions of people? Lack of clean water, government, and military conflict are the main cause of human rights violations. Notably in middle east and east asia, human rights violation are caused by all three reasons.

- Iran: Since 1979, after the Iranian revolution, Government of Iran started to follow Islamic laws. Due to extremely religious members of legislation chamber, and political leaders, Iran has one of the strictest rule in the world regarding some action that can be carried out by certain groups. Women are the most vulnerable victims of the such government principle. Women are forced to wear hijab/scarf which is not necessary for all women to do so in others countries. Women are not allowed to play any game internationally unless their husband permit them to do so. Niloufar Ardalan, captain of Iranian soccer team, couldn't attend an international tournament because her husband didn't allow her to go. Women are forbidden to go to any sport stadium even if their son, brother, or husband is playing game. In fact, Ghoncheh Ghavami, a dual Iranian-British national, was arrested when she tried to attend a volleyball game in Tehran. Baha'i Community, group of people who believe in Baha'i faith, are subjected to various human rights violations. Baha'i faith's main principle is education and peace for all human being and they believe in gender equality. Therefore, their community are educating everyone including women. Iranian government claimed that Baha'i faith is against their government's will, and therefore started to treat this community wrongfully. In Iran, more than 820 Baha'i have been imprisoned, 200 were killed or executed and 7 Baha'i were wrongly imprisoned for 20 years merely due to what they believe in. Government also launch campaign against Baha'i community and encourage discrimination against them. Additionally, there are some Baha'i owned stores that were forced shut down for certain reasons. One

of them is Baha'i store due to Baha'i holy day and Government stated that store can only be closed when it is officially recognized holiday. However, regardless of all pressure from central government, Baha'i community did not fight back against government, they are still silently educating their children, and standing strong without giving up what they believe.

- Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabia, similar to Iran, has very strict policy towards women's action and their freedom. They follows Hanbali Islamic religious laws, which gives Saudi Royal Family the absolute power. Male guardian of a female prisoner has to agree on releasing her, if he doesn't agree, the prisoner has to stay in jail forever, or until the male guardian changes his mind. Women in Saudi Arabia are subjected to certain restriction: They can't drive car, interact with other men unless they are related, play sport, and travel without male guardians. Dozens of Human rights activist and protesters against government's human rights violation have been imprisoned. Merely in 2015, Saudi Arabia have carried out 158 executions, 63 for non-violent drug crimes. On January 2nd, 2016, Saudi Arabia executed 47 men for terrorist-related offenses. On March 2015, Saudi Arabia launched airstrike campaign against Houthi forces in Yemen that include banned cluster munitions which also killed civilians. Fadhil al-Manasif, one of the activist against government's human right violation, was sentenced 15 years in prison and 15-year ban on travel abroad. Charges included "breaking allegiance with the ruler," "contact with foreign news organizations to exaggerate the news,"

and “circulating his phone number to foreign news agencies to allow them to call him.”

- Israel/Palestine: Israeli government, after they occupied large part of Palestine, supported unlawful settlement in West Bank. Their security forces use excessive forces against peaceful protesters. Hamas security forces also carry out torture against journalists. Israeli government also has the control over water in both Palestine and Israel territory, and according to some reliable news sources, Israeli government cut off most of the water supply during holy month of Ramadan for Muslims(the month of fasting). Hamas also ruthlessly killed many Palestinian people. Israeli government built a 20 feet wall around West Bank to forbidden Palestinians from traveling. Israeli government built that “Barrier” to prevent themselves from terrorist Palestinians.
- Syria: Conflict in Syria has caused thousands of innocent death. People was killed by airstrikes, gun shots, lack of supplies in hospitals, lack of food and clean water. This list goes on and on, which caused millions of refugees fleeing from their country. Unlawful detention, torture, rape, forced labor and execution that are carried out both central-government and terrorist groups. Syrian refugees walked thousands of miles by foot and boat. Thousands were dead on the road. Those who successfully seeked refuge in a host country, suffered hardships, such as: working low-paid jobs, children are rejected from getting education and so on.



“movement of energy” in body, is called evil cult by Chinese government, and officially banned in China.

Regarding all these countries’ human rights violation, United Nations has done tremendous effort to protect it. On December 10th, 1948, Universal Declaration of Human rights was adopted by United Nations. All articles ensures all human rights are protected for everyone, women, children, labor workers, and etc. It set basis for some countries to legislate their law regarding human rights protections. In 2006, United Nations created Human Right Council that promotes and protects human rights around the world. During General Assembly, Human rights organizations have chance to speak to the assembly about certain issue and their resolutions are passed through third committee of general assembly which is responsible for human rights and cultural issue. With the help of United Nations, during decision making process regarding peace and security, human rights became on of the elements that they have to consider as such action’s consequences. Rights of women, children, elders, LGBT, migrants, indigenous group, and people with disabilities are ensured to be protected by international community.

NGOs(Non-Governmental Organizations) have been the most important assistant of UN. NGOs are the main sources of information, suggestions, and resolutions of United Nations’ decision making process. Human rights NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human rights Watch are some of the most reliable resource about human rights violation around the globe. Such close relationships between NGOs and Governments is the only reason for improvement of human rights in certain region. Without United Nations, Refugees and Asylum seekers weren’t provided much aids and guidance for living a new life in their host community. After the establishment of the United Nations, refugees and asylum seekers are offered more help from the

host community and international community. In 2030 agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, within 180 potential targets, 160 of them are related to human rights, which means, if human rights issue is solved in this world, more than 90% of goals are achieved.

What are the solution for human rights violations around the world? In places like Middle East, where religion is the reason for most of the human rights violation, religious tolerance is indispensable. Without tolerance, no one will accept each other's belief which causes minorities to suffer from the consequences. On top of that, religious leaders should also try to convince government officials to make certain decisions. None of the world recognized religion promote violence, torture, discrimination or killing. Therefore, for those government officials, religious conversation with the person they respect, religious leader, will be more effective. For countries like China, world attention on human rights issue is one of the most important elements. When people realize what innocent people are suffering from human rights violation in certain countries, and advocate human rights protection in their local community, it will more effectively prevent similar situation from happening in other region than United Nations passing a resolution regarding such issue. Education on Human rights is also one of the key elements of promoting human rights issue. In present day, not that many children knows what is human rights and what other children in their age are suffering in rest of the world. If we teach our children about human rights and United Nations, it will create more human right activists and leaders who will eventually solve this problem.

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