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## Human Rights Violations In Different Countries

In the past few years in the United States, there has been a gaining popularity in the belief that some of its policies infringe on basic human rights which is false. However, throughout the world, many governments are clamping down on people's freedoms by having massive filters on information available such as in China, or the silencing of political opponents such as in Russia. There are many more acts that have been committed by countries on almost every continent that go against humanity but some of the worse cases of these acts can be found in China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, Myanmar, Syria, and Venezuela according to the United States Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2017. These acts consist of but are not limited to, kidnapping, torture, extortion, threats, and even ethnic cleansing in some cases such as is Myanmar.

While not all members of its government are directly responsible for some of the atrocities being committed against the Rohingya in Myanmar, ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya minority in the Rakhine State was committed during the previous year in early August by security forces that are supposedly under the control of armed forces Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. These security forces have apparently committed widespread atrocities against the Rohingya minority such as extrajudicial killings, disappearances, rape, torture, arrests without evidence or reason, and the burning of homes and religious structures.

Because of the actions of the security forces, more than 650,000 Rohingyas have been forced to either flee to the neighboring country of Bangladesh, most of them as undocumented illegal immigrants. While there were over 20,000 people of various ethnic groups that were evacuated by the security forces there is still an unknown number of people stuck within the Rakhine State. Since these actions have been committed, the government has taken some actions to attempt to punish the officials responsible for these actions, the majority of them have faced no repercussions for their actions. Besides from the actions going on in the Rakhine State, terrible human rights violations are being committed all around the country such as harsh prison and work camp conditions, criminalization of same-sex sexual activities, and human trafficking of adults and children.

Perhaps the country that comes to most people's minds when they think about human rights violations would be North Korea. North Korea is an authoritarian country whose supreme leader has been Kim Jong Un since 2011 when his father passed away. It is a very reclusive country that does everything in its power to avoid outside interference in its government and has very little in the way of a functioning economy, instead focusing on military strength and attempting to create nuclear weapons so that it has more leverage to try and other countries into lessening sanctions or giving money in exchange for a slight lessening in their aggression.

Some of the known crimes against its people that the North Korean government include unlawful killings of its citizens, the use of banned chemical weapons, torture, and keeping both domestic and foreign prisoners unlawfully in labor camps and detention centers. The Kim dictatorship is known for its brutality as their border agents have orders to shoot to kill anyone attempting to flee the country without permission and have even been known to kill its citizens abroad such as when Kim Jong Nam was killed at Kuala Lumpur airport with a chemical

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weapon by two women who were acting on the orders of Kim Jong Un.

North Korea has over 100,000 people in various prison and detention centers. The treatment of the prisoners is brutal and as a result, many end up dead, and those that are released usually suffer from permanent injuries. Most prisoners are given little to no food, no medical treatment and are forced to witness public executions often. There are no exact reports of how many people die in these camps, but those that managed to defect without being killed have said that it is extremely common for death to occur due to the harsh treatments and the dead are often dumped into unmarked mass graves, sometimes after the guards have defaced the corpses in various ways such as by running them over with tanks or shooting them with anti-aircraft artillery.

While China is one of the major economic powers in the world besides the United States, that does not mean that it has given its people the treatments as many other world leading governments. China is a communist country that is led by the Chinese Communist Party, with Xi Jinping as the leader of them, serving as the head of three separate parts of government including CCP general secretary, state president of China, and the chairman of the Central Military Commission. The largest violations of basic rights that China have committed recently include but are not limited to, executions without due process, forced disappearances of political dissidents, significant restrictions on freedom of speech, press, and religion, censorship of public information on the internet, and corruption involving the top levels of government. In 2018, China pushed through a constitutional amendment that abolished the term limit on the state president of China, effectively allowing Xi Jinping to remain president for life while also retaining his other positions, which never had any term limits. Unsurprisingly since China is an authoritarian state, the amendment passed with over 99% of China's 2,964 members of Parliament approving it.

While on paper China says it promises freedom of religion, religion is heavily regulated by various authorities, especially Christianity. Since 2013, Chinese authorities have taken a much tougher stance against large cathedrals and crosses. The U.S. state department found that the Chinese government has physically abused, arrested, and detained/imprisoned people because of their religious beliefs and practices. Authorities began seriously cracking down last year after a series of laws were revised that limited control that groups had over places of worship and giving large fines for unauthorized religious activities. In the last year, there have been many churches that were demolished and over 1,200 crosses have been removed according to religious activists in China.

The Russian Federation uses a highly centralized authoritarian government that has President Vladimir Putin at its head. Over the last decade Russia has become much more aggressive on the world stage, performing hostile actions such as the annexation of Crimea, the purposeful bombings of civilian infrastructure in Syria, and extrajudicial killings of LGBTI members in Chechnya, as well as forced disappearances of political opponents and the use of cyber attacks to disrupt free speech online. Because of Russia's invasion and subsequent arming of Eastern Ukrainian forces in Crimea, thousands of civilians have been killed or injured along with gross misuses of power by local authority figures. Besides the participation in armed conflicts in Crimea, the Russian Federation has also been involved with military forces in Syria. Because the government has for the most part refused to punish people abusing power and authority, these figures have been able to act with impunity.

In the first half of 2017, Chechnya began an extremely aggressive campaign against its LGBTQ

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population. They began kidnapping members that were gay and torturing them to try to get these people to give up others of similar sexual orientation. Many of these men have been brutally beaten, electrocuted, or in some cases, outright killed just for their sexual orientation. Despite their being plenty of evidence and eyewitness corroborations, President Putin's spokesperson said that they had found no evidence of these allegations.

These gay citizens of Chechnya have been forced to sneak out of the country in fear for their lives as well as the lives of their loved ones and the Russian government has made no real effort to curb these actions. Besides from the acts in Chechnya, there have also been a lot of forced kidnappings or disappearances for political and financial reasons. According to the 2016 report of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, there were 480 outstanding cases of enforced or involuntary disappearances in the country.

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