



CIVIL SOCIETY WATCH REPORT

JUNE 2015

CIVICUS CIVIL SOCIETY WATCH REPORT

JUNE 2015

This document was compiled following analysis of CIVICUS' bimonthly Civil Society Watch reports, and additional monitoring by national and international civil society organisations who are members of the CIVICUS alliance. The following table summarises the nature of the civic space violations in each country and indicates in which categories (free association, expression or peaceful assembly) significant violations took place during 2014 (in 96 countries in total). The following table summarises our understanding of the kinds of incidents included in each category.

FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	Includes raids on CSO premises; attacks* on individual human rights defenders or leaders and staff of CSOs; introduction of restrictive NGO regulations or laws; confiscation of computers, documents, equipment; public vilification or denigration of a CSO or category of organisation; selective targeting of organisations through the courts by, for example, impeding their ability to generate resources or deregistering individual organisations.
FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	Includes closure of media houses; attacks* on individual journalists or bloggers; restricting circulation of newspapers; censoring news and social media sites online; use of criminal defamation laws to curtail free speech; denial of access to information; introduction of restrictive media laws or laws that impose state censorship.
FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS	Includes unlawful use of force (tear gas, rubber bullets, live ammunition, baton charges) by police; attacks* on individual protestors; mass arrests of peaceful protestors; unlawful or unreasonable denial of permission to gather peacefully; unwillingness of states to protect peaceful protestors from violent counter demonstrators; introduction of new security or anti-terror laws that have the effect of curtailing the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

* In all three categories above attacks on individuals are understood to include assault, intimidation, harassment (through the courts or otherwise), torture, disappearance, or assassination.

Please click on this link for a visualisation of the 96 countries included on this list:

https://public.tableau.com/views/CSWDrafts/Sheet5?:embed=y&:showTabs=y&:display_count=yes



COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Afghanistan	Attacks on journalists and activists occurred in several parts of the country where the authorities were either unable or unwilling to control the activities of armed extremist groups and unaccountable local leaders. Restrictions on the basic rights of women persist impeding the work of women human rights defenders.			
Algeria	Authorities rejected registration applications from CSOs, placing many in legal limbo and hampering their ability to receive foreign funding or to hold public meetings. A number of activists and protestors were convicted after a patently unfair one day trial for committing 'violence' during a protest.			
Angola	Activists and journalists unearthing abuses by well-connected companies remained at serious risk of persecution including arbitrary arrests and detentions. Several youth activists who protested peacefully were also harassed by the authorities. Intimidation of journalists, censorship of news content and use of the courts to target particularly prominent government critics in the media was rampant throughout the year.			
Armenia	Several peaceful protestors and activists were subjected to excessive force throughout the year as authorities impeded the freedom of assembly during protests against electricity price increases and controversial pension reform processes. There were also reports of protestors being detained and ill-treated.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Azerbaijan	<p>Serious escalation of pressure on human rights organisations and activists was experienced during the year. Several well respected civil society activists were arbitrarily detained while others were prevented from leaving the country. Electronic attacks on LGBTI organisations' websites and the existence of a restrictive NGO law that undermines freedom of association further limited civic space.</p>			
Bahrain	<p>A number of activists received lengthy jail sentences for insulting the royal family while others were detained on trumped up charges following their participation in peaceful protests. Authorities continued to aggressively deny civil society organisations space to carry out their activities, clamping down on any criticism of the government.</p>			
Bangladesh	<p>Staff of several prominent human rights groups were harassed while repression of dissent and violent dispersal of public assemblies continued unabated. Illicit surveillance of civil society activists and politically motivated trials and investigations against activists remained a major concern throughout the year.</p>			
Belarus	<p>Criminalisation of dissent and use of legislative and extra-legal measures to subvert the freedoms of association and assembly continued. Authorities routinely carried out arbitrary arrests of human rights defenders seeking democratic reforms. A book by a well-respected imprisoned human rights defender was also banned.</p>			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Bolivia	An international NGO working on the rights of indigenous communities was expelled. Stigmatisation and intimidation of environmental activists and those that challenged the government's policies continued. A restrictive law to regulate CSOs that gives authorities broad powers to dissolve CSOs remained in force. Violence against women and the LGBTI community and disregard for the rights of indigenous groups also continued during 2014.			
Botswana	Authorities used an archaic sedition law to intimidate journalists, raided a prominent media house and used the state intelligence agency to carry out surveillance on activists and journalists ahead of elections.			
Brazil	Watchdogs reported that 29 environmental activists were killed in 2014. Gunmen threatened to assassinate an indigenous people's rights activist exposing the activities of gold miners. In some instances, police violently dispersed citizens protesting about declining economic conditions while the government raised the spectre of repressive of anti-terrorism legislation.			
Burkina Faso	Security forces attacked activists and some were shot dead during a popular uprising that ultimately forced the president from office. Authorities also imposed restrictions on human rights organisations and independent media. There were reports of use of excessive force against protestors while the African Commission on Human and People's rights ruled against the government for violating free expression.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Burundi	The government targeted political opponents and critics, repeatedly harassed civil society activists and journalists. Ruling party members and the armed youth wing of the ruling party used violence, threats and carried out abuses against perceived political opponents. A leading human rights activist was arrested and charged for expressing his opinion on the airwaves.			
Cambodia	Activists and organisations working on land rights and engaged in exposing the nexus between the authorities and influential private actors were intimidated and prevented from carrying out their work. Violent government crackdowns on protestors and activists continued. Human rights defenders seeking political reforms were judicially harassed and subjected to arbitrary detention. Police also shot and killed four striking garment workers.			
Cameroon	Escalating homophobia and hostility towards LGBTI groups undermined freedom of association while the government used judicial harassment as a tactic against several human rights and pro-democracy activists. Freedom of the press remained curtailed as journalists were subjected to judicial persecution, arrests and detentions.			
Canada	Proposed anti-terror measures threatened to violate fundamental freedoms while CSOs critical of government policies came for increased official scrutiny through audits and bureaucratic requirements. There were also reports of moves to curb the activities of pro-Palestinian groups while the state continued to Hoover up large amounts of information on the public.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Central African Republic	<p>The civil war left thousands of civilians killed and 80,000 displaced. The volatile security situation has destroyed civic space in much of the country and made conditions for NGOs - especially those attempting to provide humanitarian assistance - very difficult.</p>			
Chad	<p>Human rights defenders were harassed and detained while trade unions and human rights groups were denied the right to protest and demonstrations are violently disrupted. Activities of a radio station that publicized a civil society statement were temporarily suspended. A proposed law threatened the rights of LGBTI people.</p>			
China	<p>The central government maintained strict control over civic space through repression of a large pro-democracy protest in semi-autonomous Hong Kong. On the mainland, activists received lengthy prison sentences for exercising the right to peaceful assembly, and human rights advocates were harassed in advance of the Tiananmen Square massacre anniversary. Moves were underway to usher in legislation to restrict the activities of foreign NGOs.</p>			
Colombia	<p>Civil society in Colombia was put under extreme pressure as trade unionists and journalists continued to be targeted, threatened and attacked. Several human rights defenders were assassinated in 2014 for investigating corruption and calling for accountability on human rights abuses. The number of forcibly displaced persons also increased in 2014.</p>			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Cuba	The government continued to be intolerant of criticism and imposed long-term jail sentences on its most vocal opponents. Authorities also arbitrarily rounded up activists, journalists and other critics while maintaining a tight control on all media. Public shaming and economic isolation were other tactics used by the government to weaken the resolve of pro-democracy activists.			
Djibouti	Government cracked down on civil society activists, arresting and charging several including a prominent human rights lawyer. Activists were also put under surveillance by the state as protests were disrupted and the government continued to prevent independent media from operating.			
DRC	Civic space was under threat on several fronts, including in North Kivu province where attacks against human rights defenders continued while in Virunga national park rangers, environmental and anti-corruption activists were attacked for protesting against oil exploration. Several anti-government protests were quelled by using excessive force.			
Ecuador	The government exerted widening control over civil society and the media. This included targeting and closure of an NGO promoting environmental and indigenous community rights, death threats against an LGBTI activist, judicial harassment of journalists and smear campaigns against activists.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Egypt	A widening crackdown on dissent continued, involved arrests of prominent activists, raids on NGO offices, attempts to control social media, disappearances of perceived political opponents, imposition of mass death sentences, restrictions on the right to assemble peacefully and on free expression. A law restricting the right of freedom of assembly was arbitrarily applied to curb public protests against the military backed government.			
El Salvador	Smear campaigns conducted against human rights defenders and environmental rights activists were common in 2014. Activists promoting sexual and reproductive rights also faced public humiliation as human rights defenders were illegally monitored and arbitrarily arrested. Impunity for past human rights violators remained a problem in 2014.			
Equatorial Guinea	The authorities maintained a total clampdown on local media and arrested foreign journalists during 2014. Civil society was unable to operate independently and freedom of assembly did not exist in practice.			
Eritrea	Widespread systematic violations of human rights including arbitrary executions, restrictions on religion, detention of journalists and a shoot-to-kill policy for citizens trying to cross the border made Eritrea one of the most restrictive environments for civil society in the world.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Ethiopia	The clampdown on civil society space remained in place, particularly for organisations seeking to advance democratic rights and promotion of transparency in the extractive industries sector. There were continued restrictions on foreign funding for CSOs and judicial harassment and imprisonment of bloggers and journalists critical of the government.			
Gambia	Routine use of judicial persecution, arrests and detention of journalists and dissenters for exercising their right to freedom of expression and opinion marred civic space in Gambia. The threat of repressive media laws to target journalists and media outlets continue to cast a pall over civic freedoms.			
Guatemala	Human rights defenders, trade unionists and journalists were regular targets of attacks and threats by the authorities. Intimidation severely hampered the exercise of the rights to freedom of assembly and expression and the courts were used to gag the government's most vocal critics. The government and criminal groups alike use violence sexual assault and murder to attack civil society activists.			
Guinea	Heightened fears during the outbreak of Ebola led to eight health workers and journalists being murdered by a mob, as security forces continued to be accused of using excessive force during protests. Journalists were also intimidated and prevented from freely reporting.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Haiti	Several cases of attacks, threats and intimidation against human rights defenders were reported as the authorities continued to allow impunity for past abuses. The coordinator for the Platform for Haitian Human Rights Organisations and his wife were murdered while other human rights defenders received death threats.			
Honduras	Criminalisation of activism continued while there were several attacks on human rights defenders. Assassinations, death threats and various forms of coercion were used to silence civil society members seeking to protect land and environmental rights. Leaders of indigenous peoples' and Afro-descendent communities were singled out for targeting by the authorities including through judicial persecution.			
Hungary	Authorities raided the offices of civil society organisations with a view to carrying punitive audits. Smear campaigns were also carried out against human rights defenders by the political leadership while efforts were made to block CSO funding from international sources. Independent media houses that published critical stories were subjected to harassment and intimidation by the authorities.			
India	Government targeted NGOs and accused them of being obstructive to economic development. NGOs critical of official policies faced freezes on bank accounts and remained at risk of deregistration of licenses and blockage on foreign funding. Police routinely interfered with the freedom of assembly on the pretext of maintaining public order often using excessive force to disperse protests.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Indonesia	<p>Peaceful protestors were arrested and beaten by the authorities. Journalists and individual citizens were arrested, detained and criminally charged for expressing criticism of the government or public institutions. Violence against religious minorities, women, and the LGBTI community continued in 2014.</p>			
Iran	<p>Iran experienced continued use of arbitrary arrest and detention to silence human rights defenders, journalists and civil society organisations. Online activists were subjected to various forms of persecution by the state. Serious violations of free expression were highlighted by the brutal treatment of youths arrested for producing a harmless music video. Several human rights defenders remained in prison, persecuted for their political beliefs.</p>			
Iraq	<p>As the security situation worsened in 2014, so too did civic space. Security forces attacked peaceful demonstrators. Critical media stations were closed down and obstructive 'guidelines' were issued to journalists. Social media platforms were also blocked during the year while religious extremist groups posed a major threat to civil society activities.</p>			
Israel/Palestine	<p>Israel continued the detention of Palestinian human rights defenders and prevented international human rights groups from entering Gaza to investigate allegations of serious violations of international humanitarian law by all sides during the Gaza war. Freedom of assembly was severely restricted in the occupied Palestinian territories as security forces routinely used excessive and lethal force to disperse protests against human rights violations.</p>			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Jordan	Free speech was curtailed in Jordan through repressive laws, including one that allows authorities to prosecute individuals for 'insulting an official body'. During the year, media stations were raided, journalists arrested and students given prison sentences for expressing their views. A prominent regional human rights defender was denied entry into the country and detained.			
Kazakhstan	Activists and journalists were subjected to politically motivated charges. NGO registration was made compulsory and participating in unregistered and banned organisations was illegal, while newspapers were closed down for minor transgressions.			
Kenya	Civil society activists and journalists working on sensitive issues were threatened by state security agents, government representatives and non-state actors, as authorities used excessive force to disperse peaceful protests and proposed new legislation targeting civil society organisations' independence and ability to receive funding.			
Kuwait	Escalating criminalisation of online activism, including judicial harassment of individuals and human rights defenders remained a major concern as government undermined the rights to freedom of assembly and association of Kuwait's stateless Bedouin community. Civil society activism remains severely threatened.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Kyrgyzstan	Government introduced plans to clamp down on foreign funding to civil society and the activities of LGBTI organisations as the Supreme Court confirmed life sentence for a 60-year old human rights defender.			
Laos	New legislative proposals to control the internet and social media severely violated freedom of expression even as the authorities maintained tight controls on the media. Overall repression ensured a highly disabling environment for civil society in the country.			
Liberia	Media houses and newspapers were accused of defamation and libel for publishing articles which highlighted government corruption. Newspapers and journalists continued to be targeted by the government for publishing dissenting views while restrictions on freedom of assembly particularly during elections marred civic space.			
Libya	An escalating conflict between rival militias severely damaged civic space. Conditions for journalists were particularly precarious. Six journalists and a well-known women's rights activist were murdered, while several were disappeared during the year.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Macedonia	The government employed a wide range of repressive tactics - destruction of NGO property, assassinations and disappearances, court cases - to silence critics and defenders of the rights of ethnic minorities. LGBTI activists were also targeted.			
Malawi	Threats to and attacks on human rights defenders, civil society activists and journalists continued. Senior government representatives and members of the ruling party issued public statements condemning the activities of civil society and the media including likening them to enemies of the state.			
Malaysia	A human rights NGO coalition was targeted for violating 'religious tenets' as civil society attempted to fight a repressive sedition law used to clamp down on the opposition and dissidents. The law makes certain issues off limits, stifles civil liberties and creates a climate of fear.			
Maldives	There was an escalating campaign to limit the right to freedom of association of independent civil society organisations through undue policy restrictions and mass dissolutions of civil society groups. Intimidation of independent journalists and legislation undermining the right to freedom of assembly marred civic space.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Mauritania	Civil society activists - particularly those calling for an end to slavery - faced regular harassment, intimidation and repression. At least 9 activists were arrested in late 2014. Peaceful demonstrations were also broken up and protestors beaten.			
Mexico	Despite legislation to protect human rights defenders, civil society activists continued to suffer harassment and attacks. Journalists, particularly those reporting on crime and corruption were targeted and two were killed in 2014.			
Morocco/Western Sahara	Civil society organisations seeking to register in Western Sahara were denied permission as the authorities maintained tight control over civic freedoms in the occupied territory. In Morocco, several protests for political reforms were obstructed. Protestors and dissenters speaking out against corruption and undemocratic practices were subjected to judicial persecution and arbitrary detention.			
Myanmar	Reform slowed in 2014 as new laws violated human rights and many activists faced court cases for exercising their fundamental freedoms. The media was also controlled in 2014 with high levels of self-censorship and new laws to curtail media freedoms in the pipeline.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Nicaragua	The government continued to implement restrictive civil society laws as journalists were attacked and protestors were mistreated during demonstrations opposing the construction of a the Nicaragua Canal. In July, those celebrating the anniversary of the Sandinista revolution became targets of live gunfire by suspected armed groups.			
Niger	Activists and journalists calling for greater transparency in the government's dealings with the extractive industry were intimidated and harassed by security forces. Several students were brutally attacked and arbitrarily detained following a protest. The Niger government also used arbitrary arrest and detentions as a means to silence opinions critical of the state.			
Nigeria	As a repressive anti-gay law undermining freedom of association was passed, the government also attempted to control criticism by blocking circulation of newspapers, intimidating journalists and impeding peaceful protests.			
North Korea	Civic space is almost non-existent under the rule of Kim Jong-Un. Free speech and dissent are not tolerated. The media and access to information are tightly controlled and the internet and social media are heavily censored. North Korea is one of the worst violators of civic space in the world.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Oman	<p>Activists were arrested and imprisoned for organising peaceful protests. Travel bans were imposed on human rights defenders and internet access was restricted, including a ban on Skype. NGOs were tightly controlled through a restrictive association law.</p>			
Pakistan	<p>As insecurity continued in parts of the country, a repressive counter terrorism law, which violates freedom of speech and assembly, was passed. The government also became more involved in the operations of CSOs, froze bank accounts of some and required others to reregister. Women human rights defenders continued to face threats from religious extremist groups.</p>			
Peru	<p>Protests against mining development continued to attract confrontations with security forces, with four protestors being shot dead between January and September 2014. Meanwhile, journalists investigating corruption faced harassment in the courts or threats and physical attacks towards them and their families.</p>			
Philippines	<p>Systematic repression continued as civil society activists and journalists were subjected to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, illegal arrests and detention. A well respected land and housing rights activist was assassinated during 2014.</p>			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Qatar	Migrant workers - who make up 90% of the population – did not have the right to associate (form unions). New media laws and the existing penal code provided stiff penalties for criticism of Qatar’s leaders while free expression on the internet remained threatened.			
Russia	Several CSOs critical of the government were declared ‘foreign agents’ under a repressive law. Independent websites and news outlets were blocked. Legislation required bloggers with more than 3000 daily visits to register as mass media in attempts to restrict free speech. LGBTI groups continued to be harassed by extremist groups. There was a crackdown on protests in advance of the winter Olympics while senior political figures vilified civil society.			
Rwanda	Authorities prevented peaceful assemblies critical of the government from taking place. Restrictive NGO policies allowed for excessive government interference in the operation of civil society organisations while there was a wave of intimidation against the media as journalists were arrested.			
Saudi Arabia	Authorities arbitrarily detained numerous human rights defenders, sentenced a blogger to 15 years imprisonment, and publicly flogged another. Several human rights defenders remained detained in prison as a repressive anti-terror law was adopted which criminalises ‘insult to the reputation of the state’. Tight control was maintained over media freedoms.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Serbia	Journalists faced frequent threats while several were assaulted. Media outlets exposing government mismanagement and corruption were harassed. Organisations and individuals promoting LGBTI rights also faced threats during 2014.			
Singapore	Freedom of speech was severely curtailed in Singapore. Authorities banned a film discussing LGBTI rights. Activities of news websites were restricted while the authorities kept a strict check on public protests. The restrictive nature of the state limits civic space.			
Somalia	The extremely precarious security situation curbed civic space while the government's introduction of new counter-terror legislation further limited freedom of the press. Defenders of women's rights remained at risk from extremist groups.			
South Africa	Health workers in South Africa were prosecuted in the courts for asserting their right to assemble peacefully while law enforcement officials were blamed for using excessive force to control several public protests. Meanwhile a journalist was shot dead by police while covering a service delivery protest.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
South Korea_	Mounting restrictions on trade union activities, and freedom of expression - through overbroad application of a national security law - caused concern in 2014. There were also attempts to deregister a teacher's union and violations of the rights of striking workers.			
South Sudan	Government proposed a new NGO law granting authorities discretionary powers to control the operations of civil society organisations amidst closing space for human rights defenders. Journalists were routinely harassed while security officials targeted independent newspapers and media outlets.			
Spain	The Spanish parliament passed public security legislation with a view to deter protests which seriously violates the freedoms of peaceful assembly and expression. Several protestors were also fined throughout the year for organizing spontaneous protests.			
Sri Lanka	There was widespread intimidation of civil society organisations, harassment and arrest of human rights defenders in the run up to the elections. Activists who cooperated with UN mechanisms were vilified and harassed. Freedom of assembly remained restricted in the north of the country.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Sudan	<p>Authorities stepped up censorship of the media by confiscating the print runs of several newspapers. A number of activists were unlawfully detained and allegedly tortured following their criticism of government leaders. A prominent CSO was shut down in the capital Khartoum.</p>			
Swaziland	<p>The prime minister threatened human rights defenders with strangulation as a newspaper editor and human rights defender were sentenced to two years in jail for criticising the judiciary. Freedoms of speech and assembly were restricted as political parties and activists bore the brunt of repressive anti-terror laws.</p>			
Syria	<p>Widespread abuses continued as the situation became increasingly desperate for human rights defenders, many of whom have been imprisoned, beaten and harassed or had their homes and offices raided and families intimidated. Civic space remained imperiled in the country from state agencies as well as armed fundamentalist groups.</p>			
Tajikistan	<p>A new NGO law threatened to cut off foreign funding for many civil society organisations while giving authorities sweeping powers to control and monitor their activities. Several websites with independent news content remained blocked. A scholar and well known blogger was arbitrarily detained by the authorities for expressing his views on anti-government protests.</p>			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Tanzania	Authorities disrupted protests, closed down a prominent national newspaper and intimidated community radio stations. The space for public dissent was reduced.			
Thailand	Widespread and illegitimate restrictions on the media and social networks marred civic space. Authorities imposed a blanket ban on all demonstrations and the military used excessive powers to detain hundreds of peaceful dissidents and human rights defenders.			
Tunisia	Several journalists, cartoonists and online activists were arrested as government announced the sweeping closure of media houses that were critical of the military or security institutions. One blogger was sentenced to six months in prison following September 2014 comments on Facebook that were deemed insulting to the military.			
Turkey	Authorities used several methods to curb civil society activism including curbs on protests and excessive use of force with impunity. Arbitrary restrictions were imposed on media freedoms and members of an umbrella group of peaceful protestors were subjected to unwarranted judicial harassment.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Turkmenistan	The government maintained total control on citizens' exercise of rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression. In 2014, restrictions on CSOs were tightened and the state continued to control the media, including internet communication and social media making Turkmenistan one of the most serious violators of civic space in the world.			
UAE	A human rights activist was sentenced to three years imprisonment for insulting the head of state in social media postings. A prominent human rights monitor was prevented from entering the country to investigate repression and intimidation of human rights defenders, political activists and civil society actors. The media continued to exercise self-censorship for fear of reprisals.			
Uganda	There was renewed support from government circles to draft a new draconian anti-homosexuality law to not only punish same sex relations but also to criminalise civil society support of the LGBTI community. Authorities broke up protests in the east of the country and a repressive public order law was used to prevent gatherings from taking place. Journalists faced reprisals for stories critical of the government.			
UK	A new law gave wide powers to security agencies to collect private information within and outside the country while the Transparency of Lobbying Act impeded civil society advocacy in the run up to the elections. There were also reports about police infiltration and monitoring of CSOs. The prime minister confirmed that if re-elected he would work to repeal the Human Rights Act.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Ukraine	Political unrest resulted in large-scale protests in which over 100 protestors were killed. Military conflict in the east of the country led to mass internal displacement and restrictions on media reporting and assemblies.			
USA	There were worrying revelations by whistleblower, Edward Snowden that US intelligence agents spied on prominent human rights organisations. Law enforcement authorities were accused of heavy-handedness and intimidation of protestors following demonstrations against discriminatory treatment by police of African-Americans.			
Uzbekistan	Extreme repression continued in Uzbekistan as detention, unfair trials and torture were used to silence civil society activists, trade union leaders and journalists. Hundreds of dissenters remain imprisoned for expressing their views.			
Venezuela	Security forces cracked down on anti-government demonstrators, resulting in 40 deaths and many imprisoned activists. Judicial harassment was used against many anti-government activists. Media freedom was also curtailed. Authorities continued to defame independent civil society activists by accusing them of being driven by foreign agendas.			

COUNTRY	Summary of Abuses in 2014	FREE ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS	FREE EXPRESSION VIOLATIONS	FREE ASSEMBLY VIOLATIONS
Vietnam	Bloggers were subjected to judicial persecution while the authorities continued to arbitrarily detain scores of dissenters. Freedom of the media was severely restricted through internet censorship. Civil society supporters were arrested and given custodial sentences for 'disturbing public order' and activists were detained and harassed upon returning from a UN meeting.			
Yemen	Instability, several armed conflicts and terrorism continued to negatively impact conditions for civic space in Yemen in 2014. Journalists in particular faced a huge number of threats and attacks.			
Zambia	The government sought to implement a restrictive NGO law and threatened several NGOs with closure before civil society pressure forced a u-turn. Freedom of expression abuses, including politically motivated trials against journalists and raiding of radio stations also took place early in the year.			
Zimbabwe	The state failed to reform several repressive laws that are still used to harass activists and journalists. Human rights defenders and organisations continued to be illegally monitored and intimidated by the authorities.			



CIVICUS

CONTACT US



/CIVICUS



#CIVICUSalliance



info@civicus.org



civicus.org/subscribe

SOUTH AFRICA



CIVICUS House
24 Gwigwi Mrwebi Street
Newtown,
Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: +27 (0)11 833 5959
Fax: +27 (0)11 833 7997



11 Avenue de le Paix
CH- 1202
Geneva
Tel: +41 (0)22 733 3435



1425 K Street NW
Suite 350
Washington DC 20005
Tel: +1 202 331 8518
Fax: +1 703 224 8801



Unit 60,
Eurolink Business Centre
49 Effra Road
London SW2 1BZ
Tel: +44 (0)20 7733 9696