

## **OVERVIEW AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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### **HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS**

#### **Why the Reports Are Prepared**

This report is submitted to the Congress by the Department of State pursuant to Sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. 19 U.S.C. § 2464, 2467 also require that U.S. foreign and trade policy take into account countries' human rights and worker rights performance and that country reports be submitted to the Congress on an annual basis.

This report includes reports on several countries that do not fall into the categories established by these statutes and thus are not covered by the congressional requirement.

The report addresses situations and events in calendar year 2017 only.

#### **How the Reports Are Prepared**

The Department of State prepared this report using information from U.S. embassies and consulates abroad, foreign government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, jurists and legal experts, journalists, academics, labor activists, and published reports. U.S. diplomatic missions abroad prepared the initial drafts of the individual country reports.

Once the initial drafts of the individual country reports were completed, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), in cooperation with other Department of State offices, reviewed and edited the reports, drawing on its own sources of information and the Department of Labor. Bureau officers also consulted experts on worker rights, refugee issues, military and police topics, women's issues, and legal matters, among many others. The guiding principles were that all information be reported objectively, thoroughly, and fairly. DRL also ensured that all reports followed the same methodology and conformed to standard format and structure.

DRL uses hyperlinks to other key human rights documents produced by the Department of State and the Department of Labor. Specifically, readers are asked to follow hyperlinks for complete information on religious freedom issues by

consulting the *International Religious Freedom Report*, on human trafficking by consulting the *Trafficking in Persons Report*, and on child abductions by consulting the *Annual Report on International Parental Child Abduction*. Additionally linked is the Department of Labor's *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

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