

LIBYA 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Libya's interim Government of National Unity was selected by the 75-member UN-facilitated Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in 2019 and subsequently endorsed by the Libyan House of Representatives to govern the country until national elections. Following the postponement of elections originally scheduled for December 2021, the Government of National Unity's legitimacy was challenged by a "Government of National Stability" that the House of Representatives endorsed in February in a vote that the UN assessed was not fully transparent and included reports of acts of intimidation prior to the session. As of year's end, a new date for national elections had not been set. As a result, the Government of National Unity continued to govern the country on an interim basis, although its influence was limited outside of Tripoli and certain areas in the northwest. The nonstate actor known as the Libyan National Army, led by Khalifa Haftar, maintained significant de facto control in the east and south and welcomed the formation of the House of Representatives-endorsed "Government of National Stability" while maintaining independence from it.

The Government of National Unity maintained limited control over security forces, which consisted of a mix of semiregular and nominally integrated units, tribal armed groups, and civilian volunteers. The national police force under the Ministry of Interior oversaw internal security, supported by the armed forces under the Ministry of Defense. Civilian authorities had only nominal control of the police and the security apparatus; security-related police work generally fell to armed groups, which, while officially falling under security institutions, remained at least partially independent of state authority. Most of these nominally integrated armed groups supplemented their government funding with proceeds from licit and illicit activities and varied significantly in terms of training, supervision, and/or accountability. There were reports that members of security forces aligned with both the Government of National Unity and the Libyan National Army, including contracted elements of Russia's Wagner Group supporting the Libyan National Army, committed numerous abuses. The Government of National Unity and the

Libyan National Army, along with other nonstate actors, largely upheld a 2020 cease-fire agreement, although both sides continued receiving support from foreign governments, military forces, fighters, and mercenaries. Officially constituted and nominally integrated armed groups filled security vacuums across the country. ISIS-Libya was active in the southwestern desert.

Significant human rights problems included credible reports of: unlawful or arbitrary killings; enforced disappearance; torture or other physical abuses perpetrated by armed groups on all sides; harsh and life-threatening conditions in prison and detention facilities; arbitrary arrest or detention; political prisoners or detainees; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; serious abuses in a conflict, including widespread civilian deaths or harm; serious restrictions on free expression and media, including violence against journalists and enforcement of or threat to enforce criminal libel laws to limit expression; substantial interference with freedom of association and peaceable assembly; refoulement of refugees and asylum seekers to a country where they would face torture or persecution; serious government corruption; lack of investigation of and accountability for gender-based violence; threats of violence targeting members of ethnic minority groups and foreigners; trafficking in persons, including forced labor; enforcement of or threat to enforce laws criminalizing consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults; and significant restrictions on workers' freedom of association, including limits on collective bargaining and the right to strike.

Divisions between institutions affiliated with the Government of National Unity and those affiliated with the Libyan National Army, a security vacuum in the south, the presence of criminal groups throughout the country, and the government's weakness severely inhibited investigation and prosecution of abuses. The government took limited steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who committed human rights abuses and acts of corruption within its area of reach; however, its limited resources, as well as limited political will, reduced its ability and willingness to prosecute and punish perpetrators.

Human rights abuses, by groups aligned with the government and the Libyan National army, nonstate and foreign actors including mercenaries from various countries, and terrorist organizations, were widespread throughout the year. These

included killings, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, arbitrary detention, and torture.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person

a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings

There were numerous reports that armed groups aligned with the Government of National Unity (“the government”), as well as with the Libyan National Army (LNA) and other nonstate actors, including foreign fighters and mercenaries, committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

The Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Office of the Attorney General bore responsibility for investigating such abuses and pursuing prosecutions but were either unable or unwilling to do so in most cases due to severe resource or political constraints.

Alliances, sometimes temporary, among government officials, nonstate actors, and former or active officers in the armed forces participating in extralegal campaigns made it difficult to ascertain the role of the government in attacks by armed groups.

In February, the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), in cooperation with the Libya Platform (LP) coalition, reported that unidentified assailants shot and killed Ibrahim Sassi Zaghdoud al-Naluti, president of the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Change Leaders for Peace and Development and a researcher at the Libya Center for Strategic and Future Studies, along with his wife and their son, age 17, after storming their home in the Dhahra neighborhood of Tripoli.

In May, an unidentified assailant shot Ali Mohamed Juma al-Jama’I, age 22, in front of a café in Sukna and reportedly fled to the headquarters of an LNA infantry unit after the attack.

In December, Amnesty International released a report documenting evidence of alleged human rights abuses by the LNA’s Tariq Bin Ziad Brigade (TBZ). The report said the TBZ had committed unlawful killings, abductions, torture, rape, and other sexual violence against “thousands of Libyans and migrants” since the

brigade's inception in 2016.

b. Disappearance

Government- and LNA-aligned armed groups, other nonstate armed groups, criminal gangs, and tribal groups committed an unknown number of forced disappearances (see section 1.g.). Domestic and international human rights organizations reported that security services or armed groups throughout the country forcibly disappeared or detained dozens of civil society activists, politicians, judges, and journalists for making comments or pursuing activities perceived as disloyal to the government or the LNA. According to the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the whereabouts of thousands of men, women, and children remained unknown. Some were illegally detained and later released, while the bodies of other missing and disappeared persons were found in locations throughout the country, including in mass graves. Authorities made few effective efforts to prevent, investigate, or penalize forced disappearances. As of year's end, the whereabouts of Siham Sergiwa, a parliamentarian abducted from her home in 2019 after criticizing the LNA's Tripoli offensive in a televised interview, remained unknown.

On April 2, activist Mansour Ati was released 10 months after his enforced disappearance by the LNA- affiliated 302 Brigade and subsequent captivity in a Benghazi prison operated by the LNA's TBZ.

On May 12, the government's Internal Security Agency reportedly kidnapped attorney Adnan Abdelkader al-Orfi in Benghazi in response to corruption cases he had filed against Ali al-Hebri, the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Libya. Leading regional NGOs reported he was released from al-Kofiyah prison after 13 days. It was the third time he had been arbitrarily detained, following similar incidents in 2017 and 2021.

In May, the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) identified the locations of three possible mass graves, in addition to four that authorities discovered with international assistance in Tarhouna, from which 247 bodies were exhumed. Of the 247, 138 were positively identified, including three children and eight women. In July, UNSMIL estimated there could be as many as 100 undiscovered mass

graves in Tarhouna alone. In October, the government's General Authority for the Search and Identification of Missing Persons (GASIMP) announced that authorities had exhumed 42 bodies from a mass grave in Sirte. In November, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Karim Khan visited the mass graves in Tarhouna and met with victims' families and local authorities during an official mission to the country. He reported to the UN Security Council that "further applications for warrants of arrest are being submitted to the independent judges of the ICC." In December, GASIMP announced it had discovered another mass grave in the town of Suq al-Khamis, located 70 miles east of Tripoli. Two unidentified bodies were exhumed and referred for forensic autopsy.

Migrants, refugees, and other foreign nationals were especially vulnerable to kidnapping. UNSMIL received reports that hundreds of migrants and refugees intercepted or rescued at sea by the Coast Guard and other entities went missing after being disembarked at Libyan ports. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that such individuals remained vulnerable to seizure by armed groups engaged in human trafficking or smuggling. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted an increase in the arrest of smugglers and traffickers by law enforcement authorities, including the arrest of an alleged smuggler in Sabratha on the western coast.

In August, the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on Libya found in its investigation of shipwreck incidents that the Maritime Rescue and Coordination Centre, the responsible government authority, had violated the right to life of approximately 130 migrants and refugees by failing to take appropriate measures to render assistance to persons in distress at sea in 2021. The panel also received information regarding five other similar incidents in 2021 in which authorities failed to provide a search and rescue response to boats in distress that were carrying migrants and refugees in the Libyan search and rescue region.

As of December, IOM and UNHCR reported there were 1,364 migrants killed or confirmed missing at sea. Human rights organizations documented numerous reports of decomposing bodies believed to have been migrants on the shores of Brega, Sabratha, Sultan, Surman, Talmitha, Tobruk, Qarabulli, and Zawiya.

Many disappearances that occurred during the Qaddhafi regime, the 2011 revolution, and the postrevolutionary period remained uninvestigated. Due to years of conflict, a weak judicial system, and legal ambiguity regarding amnesty for revolutionary forces, authorities made no appreciable progress in resolving high-profile cases. Officials engaged in documenting missing persons, recovering human remains, and reunifying families reported being underfunded. The International Commission on Missing Persons estimated there were up to 10,000 missing persons in the country dating back to the Qaddhafi era.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and Other Related Abuses

Although the 2011 Constitutional Declaration and postrevolutionary legislation prohibit such practices, credible sources indicated personnel operating both government and extralegal prisons and detention centers tortured detainees (see section 1.g.).

An unknown number of individuals, including refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, were held in facilities under the control of armed groups affiliated with either the government or the LNA, or in extralegal facilities run by smugglers and other nonstate actors. The criminal and nonstate armed groups controlling the latter facilities routinely tortured and abused detainees, subjecting them to arbitrary killings, rape and sexual violence, beatings, electric shocks, burns, forced labor, and deprivation of food and water, according to dozens of testimonies shared with international aid agencies and human rights groups. In many instances, the purpose of this abuse was reportedly to extort payments from detainees' families.

In February, the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on Libya and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that traffickers allegedly under the control of the 301 Battalion in Tripoli (now known as the 111 Battalion), which nominally reports to the Ministry of Defense, had trafficked and tortured 53 Bangladeshi men who had obtained work visas or permits at an embassy abroad and traveled to Libya in early January. OHCHR and UNSMIL reportedly obtained videos and photographs of the group being tortured and evidence that their families were asked to pay ransom. One man was tortured to death, according to both organizations.

In May, local authorities in Gharyan, in the northwest region of the country, found the body of Abdel Nasser Ali al-Arabi in a garbage dump south of the city. CIHRS and LP reported that his body bore signs of torture and his hands were handcuffed. As of December, details of the autopsy report, the suspects, and their motives were not available.

In September, Libyan and international media widely covered a video circulating on social media depicting kidnappers torturing a UNHCR-registered Sudanese refugee child in the western town of Warshefana. In the video, the kidnappers demanded money and conducted a mock execution of the child, who is seen cowering in a corner and begging for mercy. Hours after the video was posted, the child's father also reportedly was kidnapped and held for ransom. No group claimed responsibility for either abduction.

In September, the World Organization Against Torture compiled evidence from the Libyan Anti-Torture Network documenting thousands of cases of torture. Most victims were reportedly exposed to different forms of torture or mistreatment before their deaths, including those held in official detention facilities or illegal establishments managed by smugglers or human traffickers.

Impunity was a significant problem in the security forces. The government took limited steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who committed human rights abuses and acts of corruption within its area of reach; however, its limited resources, as well as political considerations, reduced its ability and willingness to prosecute and punish perpetrators.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Prisons and detention facilities were often overcrowded, and conditions were harsh and life threatening, falling well short of international standards. Many prisons and detention centers were outside the government's control (see section 1.g.).

Abusive Physical Conditions: Prisons remained overcrowded. As of October, the Ministry of Justice reported a 40 percent increase since 2021 in the population of the prisons run by the Tripoli-based Judicial Police Authority. Prisons continued to lack adequate food, drinking water, sanitation, and ventilation. UN agencies reported malnutrition was a risk in some prisons and detention centers,

notably at the Ministry of Interior's Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) facilities. Poor and unsafe infrastructure, including frequent power cuts, was common and exacerbated sanitation problems, which contributed to the spread of communicable diseases. The ratio of detainees and prisoners to guards varied significantly during the year. Monitoring and training of prison staff by international organizations remained largely suspended, although training of judicial police continued. There was a lack of adequate gender-sensitive training for male guards, which posed an additional risk of sexual and gender-based violence.

Female prisoners faced conditions that fell well short of international minimum standards. Although there were often separate facilities for men and women, women remained almost universally guarded by male prison guards. UNSMIL received numerous reports of women subjected to forced prostitution in prisons or detention facilities in conditions that amounted to sexual slavery.

Communicable diseases, including tuberculosis, scabies, and HIV/AIDS, affected detainees in some prisons and detention centers. Most prisons lacked functioning health units, and inmates depended on family members for medicine. Inmates needing medical attention were sometimes transferred to public hospitals within the jurisdiction of whichever police unit or militia controlled the prison; these transfers often depended on the availability of private vehicles, as most prisons lacked ambulances. In March, CIHRS and LP reported that Ali Faraj Jibril al-Dibani died in Garnada prison due to lack of medical attention by prison authorities. He was reportedly among many detained by the LNA and held without any legal proceedings. As of December, UNSMIL reported that three migrants had died of COVID-19 in a migrant detention facility in the southern city of Kufra due to lack of medical attention by detention facility authorities.

There were reportedly no functioning juvenile detention facilities in the country, and authorities held juveniles in adult prisons, although sometimes in separate sections.

Administration: There was no credible information available regarding whether authorities conducted investigations of credible allegations of mistreatment or allowed prisoners and detainees access to visitor or religious observance. There

was no information available on prisoners' access to religious observance.

Independent Monitoring: Multiple independent monitoring organizations reported difficulties gaining access to prison and detention facilities, particularly those administered by the LNA. The government permitted some independent monitoring of its detention facilities by international organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, but controlled these movements tightly. UN and international aid organization sources reported that DCIM officials repeatedly denied access requests. Although some international organizations received permission to visit DCIM-administered migrant detention facilities during the year, the responsiveness of government authorities and level of access varied widely from visit to visit. As of December, UNHCR and its partners had conducted 502 monitoring visits to DCIM facilities to administer aid and register refugees and asylum seekers.

As part of a campaign to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, IOM conducted fumigations, disinfections, and cleaning interventions during the reporting period at various migrant detention facilities and disembarkation points in Tripoli. As of December, a total of 26,756 migrants had received at least one dose of vaccine, according to IOM. The migrants vaccinated were from 46 different countries of origin, including Niger (20 percent), Sudan (19 percent), and Egypt (12 percent).

d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

The Qaddhafi-era criminal code remained in effect. It establishes procedures for pretrial detention and prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, but these procedures were often not enforced. The government had weak control over police and armed groups providing internal security, and some armed groups carried out illegal and arbitrary detentions unimpeded. The low level of international monitoring meant there were no reliable statistics on the number of arbitrary detentions.

There were continued reports by UNSMIL and human rights groups of prolonged and arbitrary detention for persons held in prisons and detention facilities. Human Rights Watch stated that a large but indeterminate number of persons held in such prisons and detention centers were arbitrarily detained for periods exceeding one

year.

An unknown number of individuals were arbitrarily held without judicial authorization, for extended periods and without legal charges, in unknown locations, in prisons nominally controlled by the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Defense, or in extralegal facilities controlled by government-affiliated armed groups, LNA-affiliated armed groups, and other nonstate actors. In December, Amnesty International reported it had documented evidence of 25 individuals whom the LNA's TBZ arbitrarily arrested or detained between 2017 and 2022. According to Amnesty International's report, 15 were released after being detained for between a few weeks and five years, three remained in detention, three were arbitrarily killed, while four others remained forcibly disappeared.

IOM and UNHCR reported that militias informally aligned with the DCIM began to arbitrarily arrest and expel thousands of sub-Saharan African migrant workers from Sebha and other southern cities into Niger. IOM confirmed that militias conducted the expulsions without basic identity verification checks and subjected the migrants to extreme abuse and violence in informal detention centers.

Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

The law stipulates an arrest warrant is required, but authorities may detain persons without charge for as long as six days and may renew detention for up to three months, provided there is "reasonable evidence." The law also specifies authorities must inform detainees of the charges against them and have a detainee appear before a judicial authority every 30 days to renew a detention order, though these rights were frequently not respected, according to UNSMIL. Detainees often faced prolonged and sometimes indefinite detention, without judicial oversight, procedural guarantees, or consideration of individual protection needs.

The law gives the government power to detain persons for up to two months if considered a "threat to public security or stability" based on their "previous actions or affiliation with an official or unofficial apparatus or tool of the former regime."

Although the 2011 Constitutional Declaration recognizes the right to counsel, most detainees did not have access to bail or a lawyer. Government authorities and

armed groups held detainees incommunicado for unlimited periods in official and unofficial detention centers.

Arbitrary Arrest: Authorities frequently ignored or were unable to enforce the provisions of the criminal code prohibiting arbitrary arrest and detention. Various government-aligned and nonstate armed groups arbitrarily arrested and detained persons throughout the year.

In August, Abdel Hamid al-Mamdghota, a prominent commander of the Stability Support Apparatus, a militia that nominally reports to the Presidential Council, reportedly stormed a private medical clinic and arrested several doctors on charges of medical negligence after his cousin died of a stroke. Several similar cases were reported in other Tripoli clinics and hospitals in Benghazi and Sabha. The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Office of the Attorney General bore responsibility for investigating such abuses and pursuing prosecutions but were either unable or unwilling to do so, in most cases due to severe resource or political constraints.

Throughout the year, the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on Libya reported that state and nonstate actors continued to detain migrants and refugees arbitrarily in official and unofficial detention centers.

Throughout the year, UNICEF reported that authorities continued to arbitrarily detain migrant children in detention centers in and around Tripoli. These children lacked access to legal assistance, due process, and basic protection and health services, according to UNICEF. In August, UNSMIL reported that children were detained without legal basis as part of security operations in Qasr Bouhadi, near Sirte. UNSMIL called for the release of all arbitrarily detained individuals and stressed the imperative to conduct any security operations in full respect of the rights and freedoms of the population.

Pretrial Detention: While authorities must order detention for a specific period not exceeding 90 days, an ambiguity in the language of the law permitting judges to renew the detention period if the suspect is of “interest to the investigation” resulted in extended pretrial detentions. In addition, limited resources and court capacity caused a severe backlog of cases. As of October, the Ministry of Justice

reported there were 5,969 individuals in pretrial detention, representing a 55 percent increase from 2021. According to international NGOs, many pretrial detainees were held for periods longer than the sentences for the minor crimes they allegedly committed. UNSMIL continued to call on the Ministry of Justice to apply international standards for pretrial detention. The number of persons held in pretrial detention in Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, and extralegal detention facilities was not publicly known.

Some individuals detained during the 2011 revolution remained in custody, mostly in facilities in the west.

Armed groups held most of their detainees without charge and outside the government's authority. With control of the security environment divided among various armed groups and a largely nonfunctioning judiciary, circumstances prevented most of these detainees from accessing a review process.

The law allows a detained suspect to challenge pretrial detention before the prosecutor and a magistrate judge. If the prosecutor does not order release, the detained person may appeal to the magistrate judge. If the magistrate judge orders continued detention following review of the prosecutor's request, and despite the detainee's challenge, there is no further right to appeal the assigned detention order. A breakdown in the court system, intimidation of judges, and difficulties in securely transporting prisoners to the courts effectively limited detainee access to the courts. For persons held in migrant detention facilities, there was no access to immigration courts or due process.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The government generally did not respect judicial independence and impartiality. The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for an independent judiciary and stipulates every person has a right of recourse to the judicial system. Nonetheless, thousands of detainees lacked access to lawyers and information concerning the charges against them. In some cases, trials were held without public hearings. Judges and prosecutors, lacking resources and facing threats, intimidation, and violence from armed groups, cited concerns regarding the overall lack of security in and around the courts in various parts of the country, further hindering the rule

of law. Civilian and military courts operated sporadically depending on local security conditions. Court proceedings were limited in areas still recovering from previous fighting and in the country's south.

UNSMIL documented several cases, especially in LNA-controlled areas, in which military judicial authorities tried cases normally under the jurisdiction of civilian courts; according to UNSMIL, these trials did not meet international standards. UNSMIL also received reports of the unlawful deprivation of liberty and the issuance of sentences by so-called courts operating outside national and international legal norms.

Between November 2021 and February, the Internal Security Agency reportedly arrested and detained several civil society activists suspected of being homosexuals and atheists under the guise of protecting Libyan culture and values in a highly publicized case known as Tanweer (Enlightenment). According to UN bodies and human rights organizations, the Internal Security Agency arrested the men arbitrarily and subjected them to intimidation, harassment, forced confessions, and torture. In September, UNSMIL and human rights organizations assessed that Libyan authorities had systematically denied the individuals' rights to due process and a fair public trial. In December, four of the activists were sentenced to three years in prison. Both the prosecution and the defense have the option to appeal (see section 6, Violence against LGBTQI+ Persons).

Trial Procedures

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for the right to a fair trial, the presumption of innocence, and the right to legal counsel, provided at public expense for the indigent. Government and nonstate actors did not respect these standards. There were multiple reports of individuals denied fair and public trials, choice of attorney, language interpretation, the ability to confront witnesses, protection against forced testimony or confessions, and the right to appeal.

According to reports from international and domestic NGOs, arbitrary detention and torture by armed groups, including those operating nominally under government oversight, contributed to a climate of lawlessness that made fair trials elusive. Armed groups and families of the victims or the accused regularly

threatened lawyers, judges, and prosecutors.

Amid threats, intimidation, and violence against the judiciary, the government did not take steps to screen detainees systematically for prosecution or release. The courts were more prone to process civil cases, which were less likely to invite retaliation, although capacity was limited due to a lack of judges and administrators.

Political Prisoners and Detainees

Armed groups, some of which were nominally under government authority, held persons on political grounds, particularly former Qaddhafi regime officials and others accused of subverting the 2011 revolution, in a variety of temporary facilities. As of December, UNSMIL reported that the government continued to prohibit access by human rights or humanitarian organizations to such facilities.

Due to the lack of international monitoring, there were no reliable statistics on the number of political prisoners.

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for the right of citizens to have recourse to the judiciary. The judicial system did not have the capacity to provide citizens with access to civil remedies for human rights abuses. The law provides for fact-finding, accountability, and reparations for victims but was not implemented. Courts did process civil, administrative, family, commercial, and land and property law matters. Lack of security and intimidation by armed groups challenged the ability of authorities to enforce judgements.

Impunity for the state and for armed groups also exists in law. Even if a court acquits a person detained by an armed group, that person has no right to initiate a criminal or civil complaint against the state or the armed group unless “fabricated or mendacious” allegations caused the detention.

f. Arbitrary or Unlawful Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration considers correspondence, telephone

conversations, and other forms of communication inviolable unless access, collection, or use is authorized by a court order. Nonetheless, reports in the news and on social media indicated government-aligned groups violated these prohibitions by monitoring communications without judicial authorization, imposing roadside checks, and entering private homes.

Domestic human rights organizations continued to protest authorities' searches of cell phones, tablets, and laptops at roadside checkpoints, airports, and border crossings. These organizations noted the practice was widespread across both western and eastern regions of the country to target activists, lawyers, media professionals, bloggers, and migrants.

Invasion of privacy left citizens vulnerable to targeted attacks based on political affiliation, ideology, and identity. Extrajudicial punishment extended to targets' family members and tribes. Armed groups arbitrarily entered, seized, or destroyed private property with impunity.

g. Conflict-related Abuses

Civil society and media reports documented abuses by government-aligned groups, LNA-aligned groups, nonstate groups, foreign actors including mercenaries from various countries, and terrorist organizations. Conflict-related abuses committed by armed groups reportedly included killings, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, kidnapping, arbitrary detention, and torture.

In August, the most significant armed clashes since 2019 erupted in Tripoli between various armed groups. The FFM called on all parties to immediately cease the hostilities, which included indiscriminate shelling resulting in civilian deaths and massive destruction of civilian property. The Ministry of Health reported 191 casualties (159 injuries, 32 deaths), of which 102 were hospitalized. Five medical facilities were reportedly destroyed or damaged.

Killings: There were numerous reports that government-aligned groups, LNA-aligned groups, foreign actors, and mercenaries, and nonstate actors committed arbitrary and unlawful killings of civilians (see section 1.a.).

CIHRS and LP documented multiple reports of civilians, including several

children, being killed as a result of unexploded ordnance detonations. On February 22, two children, brothers Moaz and Fida Fathallah Musa Aburas, were killed by a land mine in Tripoli. On March 15, a Chadian civilian was killed when 2014 war-era ordnance exploded in the Benina region south of Benghazi. On March 18, two children, brothers Yusuf Ali al-Jaru al-Jazawi and Abd al-Rahman Ali al-Jaru al-Jazawi, were killed by a land mine in an area south of Benghazi.

In May, the Ministry of Defense's Libyan Mine Action Center, which coordinates demining efforts of humanitarian groups on behalf of the government, Libyan and foreign civic groups, and demining specialists from the Ministry of Interior's Criminal Investigations Department, reported that 130 civilians were killed and 196 injured by mines and other unexploded ordnance detonations in Libya between May 2020 and March. Most were reportedly civilians in Tripoli's southern suburbs. UN bodies attributed several civilian deaths in urban locations of the Ain Zara municipality to 35 land mines and other unexploded ordnance left behind by the Wagner Group, a Russia-linked paramilitary force supporting the LNA. In June, the FFM said it had reasonable grounds to believe that Wagner personnel and the LNA may have violated international humanitarian law obligations "to minimize the indiscriminate effects of land mines" and "to remove them at the end of active hostilities."

In June, the FFM concluded that two LNA airstrikes against civilians in Murzuq in 2019, killing 43 and injuring 51, amounted to war crimes.

In September, the World Organization Against Torture documented evidence of hundreds of extrajudicial killings of civilians by state and nonstate armed groups between January 2020 and March 2022. Of the 581 cases, 487 deaths occurred in the eastern and western regions, where most of the country's population lives. Eighty-three extrajudicial killings were recorded in the less densely populated southern region, which includes Murzuq. The remaining 11 cases took place in the northwestern town of Tarhouna. Based on extensive evidence of extrajudicial killings associated with the mass graves discovered in Tarhouna, the FFM concluded that members of the LNA-affiliated al-Kaniyat militia, which controlled the town until 2020, committed war crimes through underlying acts of murder, extermination, imprisonment, torture, persecution on political grounds, enforced disappearance, and other inhuman acts against the town's inhabitants.

Abductions: Government-aligned groups, LNA-aligned groups, and other armed groups were reportedly responsible for the disappearance of civilians, although few details were available (see section 1.b.). Kidnappings targeted activists, journalists, government officials, migrants, and refugees. Kidnappings for ransom, including of migrants and other foreign workers, remained a frequent occurrence in many cities.

Physical Abuse, Punishment, and Torture: Guards at both government and extralegal detention centers tortured prisoners, although the law prohibits torture. The May final report of the UN Panel of Experts on Libya identified multiple instances of torture and inhuman treatment committed by members of the Special Deterrence Force at Mitiga prison in Tripoli. The panel also cited cases in detention facilities under the authority of or affiliated with the LNA.

Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties

a. Freedom of Expression, Including for Members of the Press and Other Media

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for freedom of opinion, expression, and press, but censorship was pervasive by all sides and various armed groups, including those aligned with the government, exerted significant control over media content. Unidentified assailants targeted journalists as reprisal for their reporting.

Freedom of Expression: Freedom of expression was limited in law and practice. The law criminalizes acts that “harm the February 17 revolution of 2017.” The House of Representatives, since its election in 2014, and the government, since taking power in Tripoli in 2021, did little to reduce restrictions on freedom of expression. Observers reported that individuals censored themselves in everyday speech. Civil society organizations (CSOs) practiced self-censorship because armed groups previously threatened or killed activists. Skirmishes in major urban areas deepened the climate of fear and provided cover for armed groups to target vocal opponents with impunity.

Press freedoms were limited in all forms of media, creating an environment in

which virtually no independent media existed.

Violence and Harassment: The international NGO Reporters Without Borders reported that all sides used threats and violence to intimidate journalists. Harassment, threats, abductions, violence, and killings made it nearly impossible for media to operate in any meaningful capacity in several areas of the country.

Impunity for attacks on members of media exacerbated the problem, with no monitoring organizations, security forces, or functioning judicial system to constrain or record these attacks.

Many armed groups aligned with the government or the LNA maintained databases of persons being sought for their alleged opposition activities or due to their identity. Some journalists and human rights activists chose to depart the country rather than remain and endure harassment.

Armed groups reportedly used social media to monitor and target political opponents, incite violence, and engage in hate speech. In January, Amnesty International reported that the LNA's TBZ abducted a man from his home in Benghazi after he criticized LNA commander Khalifa Haftar on social media. In March, the TBZ reportedly abducted another man from his Benghazi home after he criticized Speaker of the House of Representatives Agila Saleh, a Haftar ally, on social media. The whereabouts of both men remained unknown at year's end. In March, CIHRS and LP reported that Tayeb Jaballah Mustafa al-Sheriri was shot and killed by an unknown assailant following al-Sheriri's criticism of Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dabaiba during a Facebook Live broadcast. Al-Sheriri had been detained for five days prior to his death. In September, Libyan Crimes Watch reported that the TBZ set fire to the house of activist Senussi al-Mahdi, who appeared in a video criticizing human rights violations taking place in the Buhadi area, south of Sirte.

According to UNSMIL, various news publications and television stations published calls to violence, intentionally spread false news, and permitted defamation.

In February, the Libyan Organization for Independent Media (LOFIM) reported that eight armed assailants attacked and harassed female photojournalist Mabrouka

al-Masmari in her car while she was driving to cover a media story on corruption in Benghazi for Channel 218TV. She departed Libya soon after the incident. In the same month, security officials arrested journalist Mohamed Sabri during a press conference outside the Council of Ministers, according to CIHRS and LP. Security officials reportedly arrested Sabri to stop him from asking questions about the sources of funding of finance loans that the government had recently approved. In March, Reporters Without Borders reported that an armed security force affiliated with the government's Internal Security Agency arrested and kidnapped Channel 218TV reporter Ali al-Rifawi in Sirte following criticism he had made against municipal officials. He was held without trial and released in July after 100 days in captivity.

As of May, LOFIM documented 14 abuses of freedom of expression for members of the press and other media, 10 of which were attacks against journalists including enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, and verbal and physical violence. Abuses were especially common in Sirte, Tripoli, Benghazi, Surman, and Ajdabiya. Ten percent of violations were against women members of the press. LOFIM assessed that the number of abuses in 2022 remained at relatively the same level as 2021.

In August, Reporters Without Borders reported that individuals later identified as members of the Internal Security Agency had attacked al-Arabiya correspondent Mohamed Messaoud while he was covering a session of parliament in Tobruk. Messaoud reportedly suffered bruising and injury to one eye. Numerous media organizations and human rights groups condemned the attack.

Censorship or Content Restrictions for Members of the Press and Other Media, Including Online Media: Journalists practiced self-censorship due to intimidation and the lack of security. The unstable security situation created hostility towards civilians and journalists associated with opposing armed groups or political factions. International news agencies reported difficulties obtaining journalist visas, encountered refusals to issue or recognize press cards, and were barred from reporting freely in certain areas, especially eastern cities. UNSMIL documented restrictions imposed by the Foreign Media Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs seriously affecting the operations of journalists in Tripoli.

In March, the government established the Committee for the Regulation of the Work of Private Audiovisual Channels to regulate the activities of media outlets. Activists criticized the composition of the committee, which reportedly includes two representatives of the Ministry of Interior and the intelligence service and is led by a former security officer. In September, the government issued a regulation requiring media outlets to obtain prior approvals from the committee and various security and intelligence authorities before conducting any audiovisual activities. The regulation also reportedly includes steep new fees payable to the regulator, in addition to the annual license renewal fees. Numerous media outlets and human rights organizations condemned the regulations as an attack on media freedom and called on the government to withdraw them.

Libel/Slander Laws: The penal code criminalizes a variety of political speech, including speech considered to “insult constitutional and popular authorities” and “publicly insulting the Libyan Arab people.” It and other laws also provide criminal penalties for defamation and insults to religion. The government acted on these laws frequently, most notably in the Tanweer case (see section 1.e.).

National Security: The penal code criminalizes speech considered to “tarnish the [country’s] reputation or undermine confidence in it abroad,” but the government did not enforce this provision.

Nongovernmental Impact: Nongovernmental armed groups, terrorist groups, and civilians regularly harassed, intimidated, or assaulted journalists.

Internet Freedom

The government increasingly censored online content. Selective filtering or blocking of access existed, although no reliable public information identified those responsible for censorship. There were reports that government-aligned groups monitored private online communications without appropriate legal authority (see section 1.f.).

Activists on social media reported that Facebook pages were regularly hacked by unknown actors or closed due to mass reporting and complaints.

In September, the House of Representatives enacted Law No.5/2022, an anti-

cybercrime law that gives government authorities broad remit to remove digital content deemed offensive to Libyan culture and values. It also criminalizes the use of encrypted communications, upon which many civil society activists, human rights defenders, journalists, and survivors of human rights violations rely. The law imposes substantial fines and up to 15 years in prison for publishers of digital content “that results in a violation of public order or public morals” and “ideas that undermine society’s security, stability and social peace.” The National Information Security and Safety Authority, part of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology, is responsible for administering the law domestically and extraterritorially “if their impact and consequences extend to Libya.”

Domestic and international human rights organizations strongly condemned the legislation, saying its overly broad language severely hindered free expression and gave judicial authorities undue power to criminalize legitimate speech. They added that the criminalization of encrypted communication tools such as WhatsApp, used by more than two million persons in the country, threatened the right to online privacy while intensifying the ability of government actors and armed groups affiliated with the government to conduct online surveillance with impunity.

A significant body of evidence suggested that foreign actors sought to influence domestic opinion and incite violence in the country by spreading deliberate misinformation on social media and other platforms.

Many bloggers, online journalists, and citizens reported practicing self-censorship due to intimidation by armed groups and the uncertain political situation.

In October, Freedom House reported that internet freedom declined in the country in large part due to a systemic crackdown on online activists, bloggers, and journalists that began in 2021. The online space reportedly became less diverse as internet users increasingly self-censored and online activists ceased their activities in response to harassment from authorities. Journalists, activists, and bloggers continued to face online harassment, arbitrary detention, and, in some cases, physical violence relating to their online activity.

The government occasionally restricted or disrupted access to the internet. In August, Freedom House documented an internet shutdown lasting five hours in the eastern city of Tobruk around the time that LNA Commander Haftar visited the city. Brief internet shutdowns also occurred in July during Haftar's visit to the city of Darna. In July, internet shutdowns and mobile disruptions were recorded following protests in Tobruk.

b. Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association, and the government generally respected these rights but lacked the ability to fully protect freedom of association.

Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for a general right to peaceful assembly, and the government generally respected this right. The law on guidelines for peaceful demonstrations, however, fails to include relevant assurances and severely restricts the exercise of the right of assembly. The law mandates protesters must inform the government of any planned protest at least 48 hours in advance and provides that the government may notify the organizers that a protest is banned as little as 12 hours before the event.

In January, local media reported that unspecified militias violently dispersed more than 1,000 migrants who had been conducting a sit-in outside of the UNHCR office in Tripoli. More than 600 migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers were reportedly arrested, including women and children. One Sudanese migrant was shot in the abdomen. The militias also burned some of the migrants' tents, according to reports from Doctors without Borders (MSF) and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

In August, gunmen reportedly affiliated with the Special Deterrence Force violently dispersed a crowd of protesters and arrested two individuals in front of the Ministry of Finance. The protesters had been demanding payment for delayed salaries. According to witnesses, the Ministry of Finance, which the special force had guarded since 2019, ordered the protest broken up.

Freedom of Association

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration includes freedom of association for political and civil society groups. The government lacked capacity, however, to protect freedom of association. Targeted attacks on journalists, activists, and religious figures severely undermined this freedom and caused some activists to seek sanctuary abroad. Numerous CSO staff members received threats, including death threats, because of their human rights activities, and several of them believed they were under surveillance by intelligence services; they also reported being unjustly detained for short periods.

In July, the FFM documented evidence that implementation of Presidential Council decree 286 of 2019, which gave the Tripoli-based Civil Society Commission (CSC) broad authority to regulate the activities of local and international CSOs, significantly hampered CSOs' local operations. In March, the CSC in Tripoli had announced the immediate suspension and outlawing of all organizations that had not complied with decree 286. The CSC also issued a statement affirming support for a series of arrests the Internal Security Agency had made against organizations allegedly found to be in noncompliance with the decree.

In July, a Benghazi court temporarily suspended Decree 286. While the judgment barred the executive authority from intervening in the operation of civic associations and CSOs, the government was unlikely to honor a decision by an eastern-based court. In September, the government reaffirmed the decree by issuing a letter to the Internal Security Agency instructing it to “stop work” for a number of CSOs and international NGOs that reportedly had not complied with CSC reporting requirements.

In the eastern part of the country, Decision 1 and 2 of 2016 enabled similar interference by the Benghazi-based CSC. Regional human rights NGOs reported that some government authorities continued to try to assert the validity of Law No. 19 of 2001, a Qaddhafi-era regulation that also imposed severe restrictions on the activities of CSOs.

As of December, the Tripoli-based CSC had essentially ceased functioning due to internal disputes, a development that, in addition to conflicting guidance from

eastern- and western-based actors, contributed to legal uncertainty and a growing climate of fear for CSOs in the country.

c. Freedom of Religion

See the Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* at <https://www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/>.

d. Freedom of Movement and the Right to Leave the Country

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration recognizes freedom of movement, including foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, although the law provides the government with the power to restrict a person's movement if it views that person as a "threat to public security or stability," based on the person's "previous actions or affiliation with an official or unofficial apparatus or tool of the former regime." The government generally respected rights related to movement, travel, and repatriation.

The law criminalizes irregular migration and requires the detention of irregular migrants. As of December, IOM reported that authorities had intercepted and disembarked 23,596 migrants.

In-country Movement: The government did not restrict internal movement in the west, although armed groups aligned with it set up some checkpoints. The LNA established checkpoints in the east and south.

There were reports that armed groups controlling airports within the country conducted random checks on departing domestic and international travelers, including of their personal electronic devices. The country lacked a unified customs and immigration system.

In August, the government reportedly prevented members of the House of Representatives from traveling from Tripoli to Benghazi to attend an official legislative session. While the government did not publicly comment, the House of Representatives ultimately cancelled its session and called on the Office of the Attorney General to investigate the incident. The attorney general never announced an investigation or released any results, however.

Citizenship: The law states that citizens may lose citizenship if they obtain a foreign citizenship without receiving permission beforehand from authorities, but there was no process for obtaining such permission. The state lacked the capacity to investigate the authenticity of citizenship applications.

If a father's citizenship is revoked, his children lose theirs as well. The law does not specify if a mother also loses her citizenship in this case, or whether minors and adult children may lose their citizenship due to the revocation of their mother's citizenship.

e. Protection of Refugees

Government cooperation with UNHCR, IOM, and other international agencies that operated within the country was inconsistent, and government-imposed restrictions often prevented humanitarian access and movement. These agencies were allowed to assist refugees and migrants in some geographic areas and facilities across the country. UN agencies monitored and publicly reported on refugees and migrants in the country, including those in government detention centers. International aid organizations provided basic services directly and through domestic implementing partners to refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR- and IOM-operated Voluntary Humanitarian Returns flights resumed operation this year. As of October, IOM reported that 8,730 migrants had benefited from the flights.

Access to Asylum: Libya is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, although the 2011 Constitutional Declaration recognizes the right of asylum and forbids forcible repatriation of asylum seekers. The government had not established a system for protecting refugees or asylum seekers by year's end. Absent an asylum system, authorities may detain and deport asylum seekers without giving them the opportunity to request asylum. The government did not legally recognize asylum seekers without documentation as a class distinct from migrants without residency permits.

As of December, there were 43,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the country registered with UNHCR, according to the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on Libya. Each adult asylum seeker was issued a printed UNHCR asylum seeker certificate that included a photograph and basic biodata serving as evidence that

the certificate holder was entitled to protection and assistance under the UNHCR mandate. Of the nine nationalities registered with UNHCR, the largest groups continued to be made up of Sudanese and Syrian refugees and asylum seekers.

Authorities made no progress in the registration of migrants and refugees at disembarkation points after interception operations, or in detention facilities.

The UN Security Council Panel of Experts on Libya noted evidence from OHCHR that expulsions from the country routinely lacked due process and procedural guarantees, including judicial oversight. Individuals facing expulsions were often deprived of access to legal assistance and the ability to challenge the legality of their return. In addition, the expulsions often placed migrants in extremely vulnerable situations, including long and perilous return journeys, with migrants being forced to travel on overcrowded vehicles across remote stretches of the Sahara Desert without adequate safety equipment, food, and water, and without being provided with appropriate medical care. Those forcibly expelled were reportedly left at borders in dire and unsafe conditions and at high risk of further abuses. Authorities continued to expel migrants and asylum seekers across the country's southern borders, and in some areas these activities reportedly increased compared with 2021.

In June, CIHRS and LP documented the recovery of the bodies of 20 migrants from a stalled vehicle on a desert road in the southern city of Kufra. The Kufra Ambulance and Emergency Service reported that the migrants died of thirst.

As of July, OHCHR documented evidence that LNA-affiliated armed groups, under the guise of fighting crimes related to irregular migration, prostitution, smuggling of migrants, and trafficking in persons, had arrested and collectively expelled hundreds of migrants to Niger. While most of the migrants were from Niger, many were from Burkina Faso, Chad, the Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Sudan.

In August, the UN Panel of Experts on Libya documented evidence that the LNA-affiliated Subul al-Salam armed group had collectively expelled at least 550 migrants and refugees to Chad and Sudan. In December, Amnesty International reported that the LNA's TBZ had expelled "hundreds" of migrants to Niger, where

they were left in the desert without any food or water.

According to UNSMIL, migrants expelled to Egypt were transferred from detention centers in the east of the country under the control of the Benghazi branch of the DCIM. Other expulsions were carried through Benina and Mitiga airports to Egypt, Iraq, and Sudan.

Abuse of Migrants and Refugees: According to UNSMIL and various UN agencies, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants routinely experienced unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, torture, sexual exploitation, and other abuses. Perpetrators included state officials, armed groups, smugglers, traffickers, and criminal gangs. As of December, IOM reported there were 679,974 migrants from more than 41 countries in the country. Of these, 23,596 were migrants intercepted at sea by Libyan authorities. IOM reported there were 520 deaths and 844 missing at sea as of December. Serious concerns remained regarding the fates of the several thousand other persons intercepted at sea and detained by a range of state and nonstate armed groups. The UN Panel of Experts on Libya documented numerous violations against migrants and refugees during interception operations, including an incident in January in which members of the Stability Support Apparatus (SSA) reportedly used excessive force by opening fire on a boat carrying migrants and refugees, killing one person and injuring several others.

Conditions in government and extralegal migrant detention facilities included severe overcrowding, insufficient access to toilets and washing facilities, malnourishment, lack of potable water, and spread of communicable diseases (see section 1.c.). In January, CIHRS and LP reported that three migrants died in the SSA-run Mayah detention center. Two of the migrants reportedly died because of medical neglect and the third of unknown causes.

Numerous reports suggested that human smugglers and traffickers had caused the death of migrants. In October, local authorities discovered the remains of at least 15 migrants and asylum seekers who were reportedly killed during armed clashes between rival traffickers. Eleven of the bodies were charred and found inside a docked boat, and an additional four bodies were found outside the boat with numerous injuries. Six Bangladeshi migrants who reportedly survived the incident cooperated with the Ministry of Interior in the prosecution of five suspected

smugglers who were arrested in connection with the incident. UNSMIL condemned the attack as a “heinous killing” and a “stark reminder of the lack of protection” migrants and asylum seekers have against criminal smuggling networks.

In August, the UN Panel of Experts on Libya reported evidence from the European Union that smugglers of migrants had increased their activities during the year. Research from the Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime) showed that smugglers generally operated as highly organized and sophisticated groups that created a complex system of well-functioning networks. Smugglers and traffickers took advantage of social media and digital applications to advertise their services and entice refugees and migrants into dangerous journeys. They continued to use large boats capable of carrying up to 500 persons in their attempts to move migrants across the maritime northern boundary of the Libyan search and rescue region. Other smugglers made use of unseaworthy inflatable boats, which often capsized or deflated, leading to loss of life. In many cases, smugglers did not provide refugees and migrants with sufficient food, water, or life jackets.

Trafficked migrants and refugees were often held captive in houses, farms, and camps managed jointly by Libyan and foreign nationals. Many of those freed from trafficking camps reported having been exploited and re trafficked by armed groups affiliated with the LNA in the eastern and southern regions, or by security agencies or armed groups affiliated with the government in the central and western regions.

UNSMIL and OHCR documented evidence that traffickers and smugglers continued to detain migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in inhuman and degrading conditions in detention facilities. Many press reports indicated refugees and migrants endured torture in official and unofficial detention centers, and nonstate actors routinely held migrants for ransom payments. In January, MSF reported that migrants released from detention centers had been repeatedly harassed, robbed, attacked, exploited for unpaid work, and sometimes kidnapped or arrested by armed gangs or militias.

In June, IOM reported that an individual was killed in a compound west of Zuwara because of a dispute among migrants from Sudan. Following the incident, the

public prosecutor reportedly ordered the compound to close and expelled the residents, causing most of them to remain on the streets until the Security Directorate reopened the compound one week later. IOM documented a steep rise in the number of migrants in detention facilities in Zuwara in subsequent months, further exacerbating overcrowding in the facilities there.

In July, IOM reported that a group of local youth attacked and burned migrant residences in Zuwara, believing them to be brothels. The perpetrators reportedly beat migrants with sticks and fired gunshots in the air. Four individuals were injured and admitted to hospital, and three others sought medical assistance from IOM the following day. The Zuwara Security Directorate reportedly intervened to arrest the perpetrators and put out the fires.

In September, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor documented the discovery of 287 Egyptian migrants, including more than 90 children, held captive in a warehouse following a raid by the local Security Directorate in the eastern city of Tobruk. The migrants, particularly the children, reported inhuman treatment and various forms of abuse at the hands of the smugglers. Both physical and verbal violence were reportedly used, including insults, humiliation, beatings, and, in some cases, torture using electric shocks.

There were limited arrests and no known prosecutions by the government of persons engaged in trafficking or human smuggling. The UN Panel of Experts on Libya documented cooperation among actors involved in the interception of migrants at sea, including state authorities, armed groups, traffickers, and smugglers, but the extent of the coordination often remained unclear. Several migrants reported collusion between smugglers, traffickers, and state officials, including from the DCIM and the Coast Guard, in interviews with the FFM.

There were numerous reports that migrants, particularly sub-Saharan Africans, experienced harassment or discrimination by citizens due to the perception that foreigners were transmitting communicable diseases.

Underreported sexual and gender-based violence against migrants and refugees in official and unofficial detention centers remained widespread.

International organizations documented extensive reports of sexual and gender-

based violence against women and girls, as well as against men and boys. In June, local media reported that a Libyan suspect had raped two very young migrant girls. The Ministry of Women's Affairs condemned the incident and called on the competent authorities to expedite the arrest of the accused. An investigation by the Public Prosecution Office was underway. In August, the UN Panel of Experts on Libya documented evidence that guards from the DCIM, as well as members of nonstate armed groups, routinely committed sexual violence to control and humiliate migrants. Observers reported that rape was often used as a form of torture and in some cases resulted in death.

According to OHCHR, female migrants in detention centers were also routinely held in facilities without female guards and strip-searched by male guards. Women and girls also lacked access to sexual and reproductive health services, menstrual hygiene products and care, and provisions for pregnant or nursing women. Women and girls were vulnerable to sex trafficking and were routinely detained in houses in Tripoli and Sebha, a southwestern city. Migrant women and girls were forced into commercial sex in both official and unofficial detention facilities in conditions that sometimes amounted to sexual slavery. Other migrant women reported being harassed when leaving their homes to search for work. Many migrant women who had been abused could not return to their countries of origin due to stigmatization. There are no legal protections for survivors of sexual violence.

The FFM continued to document evidence of sexual violence against migrant women in the northwestern town of Bani Walid. Guards threatened one woman that her husband, also detained in the same location, would be killed if she did not submit to them. Three of the other women reported instances of drunk guards going into women's sleeping quarters at night and picking women for rape, a pattern the FFM indicated was consistent with other reports.

Freedom of Movement: Migrants and asylum seekers were generally considered to be illegally present in the country and were subject to fines, detention, and expulsion. The government considered migrants intercepted by the Coast Guard while attempting sea crossings on the Mediterranean to have violated the law and often sent them to migrant detention facilities in the west.

According to IOM, UNHCR, and UNSMIL, Libya could not be considered a safe port for the return or disembarkation of migrants intercepted or rescued at sea. Returns to the country reportedly often violated the principle of nonrefoulement, as migrants and refugees systematically and routinely faced the risk of death, disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture, mistreatment, gender-based violence, exploitation, and other human rights abuses by both state and nonstate actors. UN agencies continued to express concern that thousands of migrants who remained unaccounted for after disembarkation may have disappeared into informal detention by human-trafficking networks.

Access to Basic Services: Refugees registered with UNHCR may access basic protection and assistance from UNHCR and its partners, but the government did not provide refugees with reliable access to health care, education, or other services.

f. Status and Treatment of Internally Displaced Persons

Previously internally displaced persons (IDPs) continued to return to their places of origin. According to IOM, there were 143,419 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country as of December, representing a 54 percent decrease since the October 2020 ceasefire figure of 313,712 IDPs. Benghazi, Misrata, and Tripoli were the top three regions hosting IDPs. There were 688,121 returnees in the country as of December, representing a 21 percent increase since the October 2020 cease-fire figure of 544,618 returnees. Benghazi had the highest number of returnees, followed by Tripoli and al-Jafara. Limited access for local and international assistance organizations into areas affected by fighting among rival armed groups and to official and unofficial detention centers hampered efforts to account for and assist the displaced.

The government struggled to facilitate the safe, voluntary return of IDPs to their place of origin. While some government figures made nominal efforts to promote return, the lack of adequate laws, policies, or government programs prompted international organizations and NGOs to assist IDPs to the extent possible in the form of cash payments and provision of health services, including to those with disabilities.

g. Stateless Persons

Women generally may not transmit citizenship to their children. The law permits female citizens to confer citizenship to their children only in certain exceptional circumstances, such as when fathers are unknown, stateless, or of unknown nationality. In contrast, the law provides for automatic transmission of citizenship to children born of a Libyan-national father, whether the child is born inside or outside of the country and regardless of the citizenship of the mother. There are naturalization provisions for noncitizens.

The Arab nationalist Qaddhafi regime marginalized non-Arab communities prior to its overthrow in 2011. Qaddhafi revoked the citizenship of some inhabitants of the Saharan interior of the country, including minorities such as the Tebu and Tuareg, after the regime returned the Aouzou strip along the Libya-Chad border to Chad in 1994. As a result, there were many nomadic and settled stateless persons in the country.

According to some reports, up to 30 percent of the population in the south was of undetermined legal status, which fueled discrimination in employment and services. Noncitizens without national identification numbers may not access basic services; register births, marriages, or deaths; hold certain jobs; receive state salaries; vote; or run for office.

Due to the lack of international monitoring and governmental capacity, there were no comprehensive data on the number of stateless persons.

Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides citizens the ability to choose their government in free and fair periodic elections held by secret ballot and based on universal and equal suffrage.

Elections and Political Participation

Recent Elections: In 2014 the High National Electoral Commission successfully administered the election for the House of Representatives to replace the General National Congress, whose mandate expired that year. Observers mostly

commended the performance of the electoral authorities, with the largest national observation umbrella group citing minor technical problems and inconsistencies. Violence affected some polling centers. A total of 11 seats remained vacant due to a boycott of candidate registration and voting by the Amazigh community.

Rival factions attempted to schedule elections in 2018 and 2019, but the efforts failed when the LNA launched its offensive on Tripoli in 2019. Elections slated for December 2021 had not been rescheduled by year's end.

Participation of Women and Members of Minority Groups: The 2011 Constitutional Declaration allows for full participation of women and minorities in elections and the political process, but significant social and cultural barriers – in addition to security challenges – prevented their proportionate political participation.

The election law provides for representation of women in the House of Representatives; of the 200 seats in parliament, the law reserves 32 for women. There were 27 active women members in the House of Representatives.

Ethnic minorities and Indigenous groups, including the Amazigh, Tebu, and Tuareg, expressed frustration with what they perceived as their deliberate marginalization from political institutions and processes.

Section 4. Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government

The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption. The government did not implement the law effectively. There were numerous reports of government corruption. The government lacked significant mechanisms to investigate corruption, including incidents allegedly involving members of police and security forces, but some investigations and prosecutions occurred, according to local media reports.

There were many reports and accusations of official corruption due to the lack of transparency in the government's management of security forces, oil revenues, and the national economy. Absent a national budget, the government used a monthly prorated budget based on the previous year's annual budget, which allowed it to

spend on essential line items (wages and salaries of civil servants, social transfers, subsidies) until the House of Representatives approves a new national budget. The government did so with “limited accountability and transparency,” according to the World Bank’s *Economic Monitor* report.

Divisions in economic and oversight institutions between the east and the west, including the Central Bank of Libya and the Audit Bureau, limited transparency and capacity for institutional oversight. Efforts continued to reunify institutions, including through UNSMIL-mediated negotiations.

There were allegations that government officials sometimes misused the letter of credit system to gain access to government funds.

Corruption: Internal conflict and the weakness of public institutions undermined implementation of the law. According to reports by the Audit Bureau, the highest financial regulatory authority in the country, officials frequently engaged with impunity in corrupt practices such as graft, bribery, and nepotism. There were also numerous reports of government corruption, including involvement in money laundering, human smuggling, and other criminal activities. In September, the Audit Bureau issued its annual report showing that the Ministry of Health was the top offender in terms of violations, closely followed by the Ministry of Local Governance. The report also detailed extravagant government spending, including more than 12 million Libyan dinar (LYD) (\$2.4 million) on watches as gifts to visitors; 25 million LYD (\$5 million) on cars that were never officially registered as government vehicles; and 1.5 million LYD (\$300,000) for cleaning the prime minister’s residence.

The attorney general made a series of embezzlement-related arrests in a campaign to root out corruption. In October, former Foreign Minister Mohamed Siala, three former Libyan ambassadors to Ukraine, the current and former financial controllers at the Libyan embassy in Qatar, and several officials at the Libyan embassy in Turkey were arrested. In December, courts cleared the minister of health and his deputy of wrongdoing charges on which they had been arrested in January.

Slow progress in implementing decentralization legislation, particularly regarding management of revenues from oil and gas exports and distribution of government

funds, led to accusations of corruption and calls for greater transparency.

The Audit Bureau made efforts to improve transparency by publishing annual reports on government revenues and expenditures, national projects, and administrative corruption but did not have oversight of eastern Libya-based institutions due to the government's limited ability to exert control in the east.

Section 5. Governmental Posture Towards International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Abuses of Human Rights

Several human rights groups operated in the country but encountered government restrictions when investigating alleged abuses of human rights. The government and affiliated nonstate armed groups used legal and nonlegal means to restrict some human rights organizations from operating, particularly organizations with an international affiliation.

In June, IOM and UNSMIL documented an incident in which the Zuwara Municipal Council and the Joint Security Chamber declared that the activities of all international organizations working with migrants contradicted the city's policies on illegal migration and demanded that they cease their activities immediately. They specifically accused MSF and the Italian NGO Cesvi of conducting activities that increased the migrant population in Zuwara, which numbered 35,975 individuals at that time, according to IOM. The next month, two police officers from the Passports Investigation Service visited IOM to request documentation of the organization's mandate to work in the municipality and information regarding the services it was providing.

Retribution against Human Rights Defenders (HRDs): International and domestic human rights organizations claimed that HRDs and activists faced continuing threats – including physical attacks, detention, threats, harassment, and disappearances – by armed groups, both those aligned with and those opposed to the government.

The United Nations or Other International Bodies: UNSMIL maintained its headquarters and staff in Tripoli. The government was unable to assure the safety

of UN officials, particularly in areas of the country not under its control, but generally cooperated with UN representatives in arranging visits within the country.

Government Human Rights Bodies: The National Council for Civil Liberties and Human Rights was unable to operate fully in the country due primarily to political divisions between the east and west. The council maintained limited engagement with other human rights organizations and the UN Human Rights Council. It had a minimal presence in Tripoli. Its ability to advocate for human rights and investigate alleged abuses was unclear.

Section 6. Discrimination and Societal Abuses

Women

Rape and Domestic Violence: The law criminalizes rape, including of men, but does not address spousal rape. The 2011 Constitutional Declaration prohibits domestic violence but does not contain reference to penalties for those convicted of violence against women. Specialized courts in Tripoli and Benghazi addressed violence against women, men, and children. Five women judges served on these courts. As of December, sufficient information was not available to assess whether the government enforced the law effectively.

There were no reliable statistics on the extent of domestic violence. Social and cultural barriers – including police and judicial reluctance to act and family reluctance to publicize an assault – contributed to lack of effective government enforcement. Several domestic CSOs reported throughout the year that women continued to experience higher rates of domestic violence than men.

By law a convicted rapist may avoid a 25-year prison sentence by marrying the survivor, regardless of her wishes, provided her family consents. Rape survivors who could not meet high evidentiary standards could face charges of adultery.

Migrant women and girls remained particularly vulnerable to rape and sexual violence, including forced commercial sexual exploitation in conditions amounting to sexual slavery. There were reports of egregious acts of sexual violence against women and girls in government and extralegal detention facilities (see section 2.f.,

Protection of Refugees).

As of November, UNICEF reported it had provided 5,586 women and girls with psychosocial support and safe spaces to access care and protection. It also issued a statement highlighting the importance of strengthening prevention of gender-based violence in the country and improving responses to it.

Sexual Harassment: The law criminalizes sexual harassment, but there were no reports on how or whether it was enforced. According to CSOs, there was widespread harassment and intimidation of women by armed groups, including harassment and arbitrary detention based on accusations of “un-Islamic” behavior.

There were reports armed groups harassed women traveling without a male “guardian” and that armed groups asked men and women socializing in public venues to produce marriage certificates to verify their relationship.

Reproductive Rights: There were no reports of coerced abortion or involuntary sterilization on the part of government authorities.

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) noted family planning services were significantly limited due to cultural and social norms favoring large families, as well as the absence of prioritization of the matter by the government. Access to information on reproductive health and contraception was also difficult for women to obtain due to social norms surrounding sexuality.

According to UNFPA, recent data were unavailable on the contraceptive prevalence rate. For the most recent data available from 2007, the contraceptive prevalence rate was 16 percent, and 40 percent of women had unmet needs with respect to family planning using modern methods. Women’s access to maternal health-care services and contraceptive supplies remained limited due to continued political instability. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the large number of IDPs and access restrictions in certain areas significantly affected the provision of reproductive health services. The WHO also reported lack of access to family planning services, obstetrical care, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. Reliable data on maternal mortality, menstruation, and sex education remained unavailable as of October, according to UNFPA.

The government generally did not effectively provide access to sexual and reproductive health services for survivors of sexual violence, including access to emergency contraception. Civil society actors provided limited legal assistance to survivors in the absence of the government.

Discrimination: The 2011 Constitutional Declaration states citizens are equal by law with equal civil and political rights and the same opportunities in all areas without distinction on the grounds of gender. Absent implementing legislation, and operating with limited capacity, the government did not effectively enforce these declarations.

Women faced social forms of discrimination that affected their ability to access employment, their workplaces, their mobility, and their personal freedom. Although the law prohibits discrimination based on gender, there was widespread cultural, economic, and societal discrimination against women.

The country lacks a unified family code. Sharia (Islamic religious law) often governs family matters, including inheritance, divorce, and the right to own property. While civil law mandates equal rights in inheritance, women often received less due to interpretations of sharia that favor men.

In October, the government issued a decision granting noncitizen children of Libyan women all the rights that Libyan citizens enjoy. Human Rights Watch criticized the decision for failing to guarantee the right of Libyan women to transmit nationality to their children. Human Rights Watch argued that the decision did little to resolve the discrimination faced by noncitizen children of Libyan women under civil law.

Systemic Racial or Ethnic Violence and Discrimination

Arabic-speaking Muslims of Arab, Amazigh, and mixed Arab-Amazigh ancestry constitute a majority of the citizenry. The principal linguistic-based minorities are the Amazigh, Tuareg, and Tebu. Except for some Amazigh, who belong to the Ibadi sect of Islam, minority groups are predominantly Sunni Muslim but often identified with their respective cultural and linguistic heritages regarding Arab traditions.

The law grants the right for “all linguistic and cultural components to have the right to learn their language,” and the government nominally recognizes the right to teach minority languages in schools. Minority and Indigenous groups complained that their communities were often allowed to teach their languages only as an elective subject within the curriculum.

Some members of the Tebu minority residing in the south reported their access to higher education was limited, since university campuses were in geographic areas controlled by Arab tribes that routinely harassed or denied them freedom of movement. Universities reportedly did not provide offsite learning alternatives to these Tebu students.

The extent to which the government enforced official recognition of minority rights was unclear. There were reports that teachers of minority languages faced discrimination in receiving accreditation and in being eligible for bonuses, training, and exchange opportunities provided by the Ministry of Education.

There were also reports that individuals with non-Arabic names encountered difficulties registering these names in civil documents.

Ethnic minorities faced instances of societal discrimination and violence. Racial discrimination existed against dark-skinned citizens, including those of sub-Saharan African heritage. Government officials and journalists often distinguished between “local” and “foreign” populations of Tebu and Tuareg in the south and advocated expulsion of minority groups affiliated with political rivals on the basis they were not truly “Libyan.”

Several Tebu and Tuareg communities received substandard or no services from municipalities, lacked national identity numbers (see section 2.d.), faced widespread social discrimination, and suffered from hate speech and identity-based violence. In the south, if a member of one tribe or group attacked a member of another tribe or group, retribution against multiple members of the attacking group was not uncommon.

Some members of ethnic minority communities in the south and west reported being unwilling to enter certain courthouses and police stations due to intimidation and fear of reprisal.

There were numerous reports throughout the year of ethnic minorities being injured or killed in confrontations with other groups.

Children

Birth Registration: By law children derive citizenship from a citizen father. The law permits citizen women who marry foreign men to transmit citizenship to their children, although some contradictory provisions may potentially perpetuate discrimination. There are also naturalization provisions for noncitizens.

Education: Many schools remained closed throughout the year due to lack of materials, conflict-related damage, or security concerns. Internal displacement further disrupted school attendance as many schools were repurposed as IDP shelters.

Child Abuse: The law provides for the protection of children from abuse and the protection of children's rights in cases concerning custody, guardianship, care, and juvenile justice.

In July, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict published a report documenting 63 grave violations against 52 children (32 boys, 20 girls) that occurred in Libya in 2021. The report also documented sexual violence against seven girls by the Abu Issa Brigade and the now defunct Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade that had controlled detention facilities of the Department for Combating Illegal Migration. In addition, the report documented 10 denials of humanitarian access that UN bodies attributed to GNU-affiliated armed groups and unidentified perpetrators.

Child, Early, and Forced Marriage: The minimum age for marriage is 18 for both men and women, although judges may permit those younger than 18 to marry. LNA authorities reportedly continued to impose a minimum age of 20 for both men and women. Early marriages were relatively rare, according to the most recent information from UN Women in 2019, although comprehensive statistics were not available due to the lack of a centralized civil registry system and the continuing conflict.

There were anecdotal reports of child marriage occurring in some rural and desert

areas where tribal customs are more prevalent. There were also unconfirmed reports that civil authorities could be bribed to permit underage marriage.

Sexual Exploitation of Children: There were no laws prohibiting or penalties for the commercial sexual exploitation of children or for child pornography, nor laws regulating the minimum age of consensual sex.

Antisemitism

Most Jewish persons left the country between 1948 and 1967. Some Jewish families reportedly remained, but no estimate of the population was available. There were no reports of clearly antisemitic acts during the year.

Trafficking in Persons

See the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

Acts of Violence, Criminalization, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Expression, or Sex Characteristics

Criminalization: Same-sex sexual activity between consenting adults is criminalized with a penalty of three to five years' imprisonment. It was enforced. Human Rights Watch reported that punishment can include flogging in addition to imprisonment.

Violence against LGBTQI+ Persons: There were reports of physical violence, harassment (including by government agents), and blackmail based on sexual orientation and gender identity (see section 1.e., Denial of a Fair Public Trial). Armed groups often policed communities to enforce compliance with their commanders' understanding of "Islamic" behavior, harassing and threatening with impunity individuals believed to have lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex (LGBTQI+) orientations and their families.

According to 2021 information, the most recent available, from the FFM, individuals were targeted for arrest and abuse, including sexual violence, solely

because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In at least one case documented by the FFM, a young detainee had to undergo forced anal examination. FFM observers added that such reports, which they received from different parts of the country, revealed “grave and endemic sexual and gender-based violence.”

Discrimination: Societal discrimination against LGBTQI+ persons was widespread, and official discrimination was codified in local interpretations of sharia. Disproportionate enforcement of public order laws against LGBTQI+ persons reportedly served to justify arbitrary arrest. Human rights groups reported that punishment could include flogging and up to five years’ imprisonment.

Little information existed on discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity in employment, housing, access to education, or health care. Observers noted that the threat of possible violence or abuse could dissuade persons from reporting such discrimination.

Availability of Legal Gender Recognition: Legal gender recognition is not available.

Involuntary or Coercive Medical or Psychological Practices Specifically Targeting LGBTQI+ Individuals: Information on the existence or prevalence of the practice of so-called conversion therapy, including, but not limited to forced or involuntary talk therapy, electric shock, use of drugs or hormones, surgery, detention or imprisonment, “corrective rape,” celibacy, psychiatric institutionalization, religious rituals, starvation, and involuntary sterilization, pregnancy, or child-rearing, in an effort to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, was not available by year’s end. Information on the practice of performing unnecessary surgeries on intersex persons was also not available.

Restrictions of Freedom of Expression, Association, or Peaceful Assembly: The penal code indirectly restricted freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. According to civil society activists, the Internal Security Agency increasingly relied on Articles 206, 211, and 291, which reportedly aim to criminalize actions that threaten to undermine traditional Libyan culture and

values, as a pretext for arresting and detaining suspected LGBTQI+ individuals. According to UN bodies and human rights organizations, such individuals were subjected to intimidation, harassment, forced confessions, and torture.

Persons with Disabilities

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration addresses the rights of persons with disabilities by providing for monetary and other types of social assistance for the “protection” of persons with “special needs” with respect to employment, education, access to health care, and the provision of other government services, but it does not explicitly prohibit discrimination. The government did not effectively enforce these provisions. IDPs, migrants, and refugees with disabilities were especially vulnerable to poor treatment in detention facilities.

Some organizations estimated that approximately 1.5 percent of citizens may have some form of disability. Years of postrevolutionary conflict also led to a greater incidence of persons maimed by shelling or explosive war remnants.

Section 7. Worker Rights

a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

The law does not provide for the right of workers to form and join independent unions. It provides for the right of workers to bargain collectively and conduct legal strikes, with significant restrictions. The penalties for violating these rights were less than those under other laws involving denials of civil rights. Information on how regularly violators faced penalties was not available. The law neither prohibits antiunion discrimination nor requires the reinstatement of workers for union activity.

By law workers in the formal sector are automatically members of the General Trade Union Federation of Workers, although they may elect to withdraw from the union. Only citizens may be union members, and regulations do not permit foreign workers to organize. The government was limited in its ability to enforce applicable labor laws. The requirement that all collective agreements conform to the “national economic interest” restricted collective bargaining. Workers may call strikes only after exhausting all conciliation and arbitration procedures. The

government or one of the parties may demand compulsory arbitration, thus severely restricting strikes. The government has the right to set and cut salaries without consulting workers. Employees organized spontaneous strikes, boycotts, and sit-ins in a number of workplaces, generally to protest unpaid salaries.

b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The law does not prohibit or criminalize all forms of forced or compulsory labor. The penal code criminalizes slavery and prescribes penalties of five to 15 years' imprisonment. It also criminalizes the buying and selling of slaves and prescribes penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment. Other forms of forced labor are not criminalized. The government did not fully enforce the law. There were numerous anecdotal reports of migrants and IDPs being subjected to forced labor by armed groups, migrant smugglers, and other criminal actors. According to press reports, individuals were compelled to support the armed groups that enslaved them, including preparing and transporting weapons. Others were forced under threat of violence to perform manual labor on farms, at industrial and construction facilities, and in homes.

Smugglers, traffickers, and government-aligned armed groups reportedly exploited migrants for forced labor. There were reports that migrants in some official or informal detention locations had to engage in construction and agricultural work for no wages. According to international observers, some migrants also had to provide services for armed groups, such as carrying and transporting weapons, cooking food, cleaning, and clearing unexploded ordnance. In March, a former detainee of Ruwaymi prison in the western town of Ayn Zarah told UNSMIL and OHCHR that after their official release, he and 34 other Sudanese migrants were intercepted at sea and held for months to perform unpaid construction work, farming, car repairs, and maintenance in the prison. He was reportedly forced to work in the car workshop and was allegedly beaten, tortured, and detained in solitary confinement twice after refusing to work and for attempting to escape. He was released only after his family paid for his return to Sudan.

Private employers sometimes used detained migrants from prisons and detention centers as forced labor on farms or construction sites; when the work was completed or the employers no longer required the migrants' labor, employers

returned them to detention facilities.

See also the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment

See the Department of Labor's *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/findings/> and the *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor* at <https://www.dol.gov/ilaab/reports/child-labor/list-of/goods/>.

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The 2011 Constitutional Declaration provides for a right to work for every citizen and prohibits any form of discrimination based on religion, race, political opinion, language, wealth, kinship, social status, and tribal, regional, or familial loyalty. The law does not prohibit discrimination based on age, gender, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, social status, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable diseases. The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination based on an individual's employment or occupation. The limitations of the government restricted its ability to enforce applicable laws. The penalties for violating these laws were less than those related to civil rights.

Women faced discrimination in the workplace. The law prohibits women from working in jobs deemed "morally inappropriate." Regulations issued by the General People's Committee prohibit women from working in roles "unsuited to their nature as women" and permit women's work hours to be reduced for certain professions and occupations as a function of the work's requirements and the proportion of male and female workers. Observers reported that authorities precluded hiring women for positions in the civil service. They also reported social pressure on women to leave the workplace, especially in high-profile professions such as journalism and law enforcement. In rural areas, societal discrimination restricted women's freedom of movement, including to local destinations, and impaired their ability to play an active role in the workplace.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

Wage and Hour Laws: The Ministry of Labor and Rehabilitation's Department of Labor Inspection and Occupational Safety is responsible for enforcing the national monthly minimum wage. There is no set official poverty income level. The law stipulates a workweek of 40 hours, standard working hours, night shift regulations, dismissal procedures, and training requirements. The law does not specifically prohibit excessive compulsory overtime.

Occupational Safety and Health: The Ministry of Labor and Rehabilitation is responsible for occupational safety and health (OSH) issues, but no information was available on enforcement and compliance. OSH standards were appropriate for the main industries, but the government generally did not enforce them. Certain industries, such as the petroleum sector, attempted to maintain standards set by foreign companies. Responsibility for identifying unsafe situations remained with OSH experts and not the worker. The law provides OSH standards and grants workers the right to court hearings regarding abuses of these standards. The law does not provide workers the right to remove themselves from a hazardous workplace without jeopardizing their employment.

Wage, Hour, and OSH Enforcement: The government's limitations restricted its ability to enforce wage and hour laws and OSH standards.

Informal Sector: No accurate data on the size of the informal economy were available. The law does not provide for OSH standards for workers in the informal economy.