



Photo: ANGELA WEISS/AFP via Getty Images

30 April 2025

Also available in Español, Français, العربية

President Trump's First 100 Days: Attacks on Human Rights, Cruelty and Chaos

As President Donald Trump marks his first 100 days in office, Amnesty International highlights the human rights crisis fueled by President Trump's administration's authoritarian practices, discriminatory and racist policies, and dangerous rhetoric.

In ***Chaos & Cruelty: 10 Compounding Assaults on Human Rights***, Amnesty International reviews President Trump's attacks on domestic and international human rights in his first 100 days in office. From suppressing dissent to demonizing and targeting immigrants, to retreating from multilateral bodies that protect human rights around the world, the Trump administration has been systematically eroding human rights protections, fostering a climate of fear and division, and undermining the rule of law.

"One hundred days into his second term, President Trump has led with cruelty and chaos, creating a human rights emergency that has affected millions of people by suppressing dissent, undermining the rule of law, and eroding norms and institutions essential to the protection of human rights," said Paul O'Brien, executive director of Amnesty International

USA. "The Trump administration has fully embraced authoritarian tactics more commonly associated with repressive leaders to silence and punish those who disagree with him, while weaponizing the government against people and institutions in the United States and beyond to entrench his own power and further an anti-rights agenda."



One hundred days into his second term, President Trump has led with cruelty and chaos, creating a human rights emergency that has affected millions of people by suppressing dissent, undermining the rule of law, and eroding norms and institutions essential to the protection of human rights

Paul O'Brien, executive director of Amnesty International USA

The Trump administration's policies in the first 100 days have already had devastating consequences on the lives of people in the U.S. and in other parts of the world:

- **Ending asylum and targeting immigrants:** Mass deportations, enforced disappearances under the Alien Enemies Act, family separations, and harsh restrictions on the right to asylum have violated international law. These actions have torn communities apart and created a reality in which immigrants, including those who have come to the U.S. seeking safety, are pushed into the shadows, living in fear.
- **Attacking freedom of expression and the right to protest:** Crackdowns on student protestors, especially those in support of Palestinian rights, have threatened the rights to free speech and peaceful assembly. Especially targeted are students who are not U.S. citizens as they are threatened with detention and deportation for exercising their right to free speech.
- **Undermining the rule of law:** Disregarding court orders, threatening impeachment of judges, attacking law firms and lawyers, abusing executive power and eroding checks and balances are authoritarian practices the Trump administration has used to push forward his anti-rights agenda.
- **Undermining press freedom:** Targeting journalists, suing media outlets, pulling funding that supports free press globally, and abusing regulatory power through the Federal Communications Commission undermine the critical role of independent media in fostering debate, discussion, and dissent, which are essential to the defense of human rights.
- **Attacking the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ communities:** Anti-trans policies and executive orders have contributed to a dangerous climate of discrimination and indicate an attempt to erase transgender people's existence under the law. Measures have also been taken to weaken sexual and reproductive rights guarantees for all people, particularly the right to abortion for women and people who can get pregnant.
- **Marginalizing Black and other racialized communities:** Forced closures of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs and threats to defund universities that embrace

racial equity are a blatant attack on racial justice.

President Trump's attacks on human rights are overlapping and compounding. Hundreds of university students have been targeted for deportation. One emblematic example of the Trump administration's racist actions, repression, and disregard for human rights is the case of Mahmoud Khalil, a Palestinian student and lawful permanent resident, detained and placed in deportation proceedings for participating in peaceful protests at Columbia University.

"Mahmoud Khalil's case sends a chilling message: if you speak out for human rights, you will be targeted, you will be punished, and you will not have due process," said O'Brien. "That is a terrifying prospect, not just for students, not just for immigrants, but for everyone. When we look at the cumulative effect of the Trump administration's actions, it amounts to a sweeping attack on human rights and the systems that uphold them. From this perspective, the damage and devastation of the first 100 days are undeniably clear."



When we look at the cumulative effect of the Trump administration's actions, it amounts to a sweeping attack on human rights and the systems that uphold them. From this perspective, the damage and devastation of the first 100 days are undeniably clear

Paul O'Brien, executive director of Amnesty International USA

President Trump's chaotic and cruel agenda is also undermining the rights of people around the world, creating instability and uncertainty that harms safety and security not just of people globally but also those in the U.S., and undermines their prosperity.

- **Abruptly dismantling U.S. foreign assistance:** Sweeping and abrupt cuts to foreign aid have had a catastrophic impact on global humanitarian, development and human rights efforts. These cuts are not just financial—they represent an abandonment of the U.S. stated commitments to human rights, public health, and global peace and security.
- **Retreating from multilateral bodies that protect human rights around the world:** By retreating from global leadership, withdrawing from the Human Rights Council (HRC), the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Agreement, reviewing membership in UNESCO and imposing sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Trump Administration has intensified efforts to undermine global mechanisms for justice and accountability.
- **Retreating from civilian harm mitigation efforts:** From shrinking offices aimed at reducing civilian harm caused by U.S. military operations to reversing executive orders aimed at ensuring the U.S.'s arms transfers do not contribute to violations of international law, the Trump Administration has demonstrated a dangerous disregard for the lives of civilians endangered by armed conflicts.
- **Demolishing checks on corporate accountability:** President Trump and his administration have taken down existing checks on corporate accountability and

slashed efforts to fight corruption, including pausing enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Tech firms have long facilitated discriminatory and authoritarian practices, but President Trump's actions have exacerbated this trend. Meanwhile, President Trump has seemingly given carte blanche to the wealthiest man on Earth, Elon Musk, to run rampant with DOGE, directing actions that appear to violate federal law, including accessing sensitive, personal data of millions of Americans.

The perilous state of human rights in the United States comes at a time when **authoritarian practices have been increasing globally**. In fact, the Trump administration's relentless attacks on human rights are turbocharging harmful trends already present, gutting international human rights protections and endangering billions across the planet.

"We are witnessing an alarming escalation of state-sponsored repression and abandonment of the rule of law and human rights norms around the world. As the largest grassroots human rights organization in the world, we are mobilizing to protect civic space, push back against authoritarian practices, and build long-term people power," said Erika Guevara-Rosas, Amnesty International's Senior Director for Research, Policy, Advocacy and Campaigns. "Human rights should not be a political pawn. Governments must actively oppose and denounce authoritarian practices that violate human rights and take steps to address their impact wherever they occur, including in the United States. People around the world, including those in human rights and justice movements, are resisting and standing firmly against trends that threaten to lead present and future generations into an abyss. Political leaders must seize this pivotal moment to uphold and defend the rights and dignity of all."

“

We are witnessing an alarming escalation of state-sponsored repression and abandonment of the rule of law and human rights norms around the world. As the largest grassroots human rights organization in the world, we are mobilizing to protect civic space, push back against authoritarian practices, and build long-term people power

Erika Guevara-Rosas, Amnesty International's Senior Director for Research, Policy, Advocacy, and Campaigns