

CIVIL SOCIETY IS NOT THE ENEMY

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- *How attacks on the North and South are pushing activism to respond* •

ABSTRACT

Restrictions to civil society that were first identified as part of the Global South landscape are increasingly present in the Global North, impacting organisations and social movements in both hemispheres. Besides the more direct impact on funding, the closing of democratic spaces in the North removes important positive symbolic references for the South and unveils a new normal for democracy, in which the public interest is not at the centre. How can activism in the North and South respond to that and mobilise public opinion to support the defence and expansion of a rights-based agenda and maintain dissent, crucial for democracy?

KEYWORDS

Global South | Activism | Civil Society | Movement-Building | Solidarity | Dissent

1 • Introduction

I have been working with civil society groups since 2003 but it was only in mid-2015 that I came across the term, “closing or shrinking of civic space”, for a phenomenon that I had experienced while accompanying groups all over Brazil and Latin America. At first, I heard the term almost exclusively in reference to role of the state in designing and enacting legislation and controls for civil society.

But increasingly the definition encompasses restrictions that trample on the possibility of civil society to influence the defence of the public interest and to voice dissent, led by state and non-state actors, nationally and internationally. And whereas the issue of shrinking civic space was initially considered a Global South problem, increasingly we see negative news coming from the North in regard to the promotion of democratic values and human rights and which undoubtedly fit within the definition of “shrinking”. Unthinkable episodes of repression of protests, surprising election results and restrictive legislation - that seem out of place in established democracies – are starting to pile up. Be it the concerning approval of anti-protest laws in the United States of America (US),¹ or the continued lack of guarantees for freedom of association for trade unions in South Korea.² In the European Union (EU) alone, a closer analysis shows that “only 13 of 28 EU member states now have ‘open’ civic space, an uncomfortable statistic for the leaders of a union founded on the values of democracy and human rights.”³

This article will examine how these restrictions on civil society in the Global North extend to and have an impact on civic space in the Global South before offering suggestions as to how civil society can best respond to this concerning trend.

2 • The domino effect

Perhaps the most obvious way in which the Global North is influencing restrictions currently seen in the South is through “copycat” restrictive legislation, in particular the question of antiterrorism legislation. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) – an independent international body comprised of member governments and often described as the most powerful organisation you have never heard of – was established during a G-7 meeting in 1989 to generate recommendations to prevent money laundering from drug trafficking. But after 9/11, the Global North originated group took upon itself to also recommend measures to prevent terrorism financing. It is currently housed, administratively, at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

As much as counterterrorism measures are needed and welcome, they need to be designed proportionally to the risks posed. For a long time, these risks were not factored into the evaluation of a country’s attention to their counterterrorism architecture. One of FATF’s recommendations, Recommendation 8, was amended in mid-2016 after intense

lobbying from civil society under the Global NPO Coalition on FATF, to acknowledge that “not all NPOs are at risk and directs countries to undertake a risk based approach when considering terrorism financing measures”.⁴ Recommendation 8, as originally drafted, stated that non-profit organisations were “particularly vulnerable” to be used as channels for terrorism financing. This careless recommendation caused many countries – both in the South and North – to, alongside creating and renewing antiterrorism laws, create and increase obstacles for registration of civil society organisations or for the receipt of foreign funds, with a huge impact on banking regulations for non-profits.⁵ One concrete example is the implementation of the counterterrorism standards in India. Alongside financial regulations, the standards included a set of measures that did not apply to funding of terrorist organisations. Combined with other restrictive laws in place, these measures helped to justify the revocation of operation licences for more than 13,000 NGOs, especially those that were political in nature or that received foreign funding and were presented as a risk to the national interest.⁶

In addition, it is not uncommon for antiterrorism laws to have a never-ending cycle of reforms and add-ons, such as what has happened in the Turkey or in Chile.⁷ In the case of Chile, the first law was approved in 1984. Since then it has received four amendments: in 1991, 2003 and 2011 (with two different bills approved), not to mention the required adjustments to the Criminal Code in 2002 and 2005. In Turkey the same logic was applied. The law was first approved in 1991 (Act 3713) and then adjusted in 1995, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2010 and 2013. In both cases, there is ample evidence of the misuse of those laws to target dissent. In Chile there is the well-known case of the accusation of terrorism against Mapuche indigenous groups⁸ for which the country was condemned at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.⁹ In Turkey, numerous politicians, reporters and activists were prosecuted through its wide-reaching terrorism legislation.¹⁰

The understanding of this *modus operandi* in which governments increasingly use antiterrorism laws to target dissent helped to shape the organising, advocacy and policy work taken forward by Brazilian groups to oppose the approval of one such law in the country. In order for Brazilian organisations and social movements to understand the enormity of the threat brought by a new and unnecessary piece of antiterrorism legislation,¹¹ fast tracked in early 2016, it was crucial to understand what impact similar laws had brought to Chile, Turkey, the US, the UK and others.¹² Although the obvious motivation for the law was the impending Olympic Games of Rio 2016, the pressure that FATF exerted itself was considerable. FATF’s influence on the approval of the antiterrorism law in Brazil was tracked to the first draft of the legislation.¹³ It was drafted jointly by the Justice Minister and the Finance Minister, who had attended the World Economic Forum in Davos and returned to Brazil convinced that being part of FATF’s dirty list for not attending fully its recommendations would damage the country’s ability to attract Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). Although the law ended up being approved, the efforts undertaken by civil society developed a greater understanding of the threats of criminal laws against politically motivated movements and generated an informal coalition attentive to these risks.

There is also another element to consider in the domino effect that restrictions have around the globe: what happens when the funders are the ones, if not leading, but at least feeding the restrictive measures? The US government, one of the world's largest donors,¹⁴ has strongly pushed for antiterrorism measures after 9/11 and the security framework it has put in place puts activism at risk. One of those measures is the well-documented negative impact of the case *Holder v Humanitarian Law Project*, in which the Supreme Court decided against the Humanitarian Law Project. The court relied on the prohibition in the Patriot Act on providing material support to foreign terrorist organisations to declare that any assistance given to a group considered terrorist by the government could legitimise it and therefore, is prohibited. The case is considered a major blow to freedom of speech and association.¹⁵ Other episodes include the last election results in the US,¹⁶ the inhumane reaction of European countries to refugees and migrants, the UK's efforts to break the link between its human rights framework and the European Court of Human Rights¹⁷ or the punishment of organisations for political stances (such as ATTAC¹⁸ in Germany¹⁹). These episodes, as others alike in both hemispheres, are too often defended by politicians and the commercial media as the only way forward to guarantee growth and progress, while human rights are increasingly presented as just an added cost.

These kinds of setback in the Global North are stripping the South of positive examples. Not only that, but it is creating an environment in which taking restrictive measures against civil society is seen by governments everywhere to be acceptable – because the US and other Northern governments are doing it. Consequently, Northern governments have reduced legitimacy to criticise Southern governments on the issue.

3 • Funding and solidarity

As well as the issue of the Global North driving restrictions in the South based on northern governments' legislative and policy agendas, there is also a concerning trend in the North that is seeing funding for civil society come under pressure – both from individuals and government agencies.

The UK-based Charities Aid Foundation produces a yearly survey on global giving by individuals. The most recent survey shows that all the developed countries that were ranked in the top 20 most generous nations experienced a decrease in fundraising in 2016.²⁰ While this may be due to poor economic indicators, it can also be interpreted to reflect the increased anti-European sentiment felt across EU countries. This sentiment, aligned with the rise of populism, could be making Europeans more reluctant to donate to civil society groups that do not follow nationalistic worldviews or that are not acting locally.

Similarly, at the level of national government, an analysis by the European Parliament shows that its member states are puzzled by the current context and that they are choosing to support “uncontroversial, development CSOs as it has become harder to engage with more

political organisations. In some cases this has helped keep some link to civil society open; in many cases, however, critics say it has inadvertently helped regimes isolate outspoken civil society opponents under the guise of partnering with the EU on development policy. In its high level diplomacy the EU can still be strikingly cautious in confronting regimes engaged in brutal civil society crackdowns. The general direction of EU security policy often undercuts efforts to hold the shrinking space problem at bay.”²¹

Since the concept of philanthropy and government aid is still being developed in many countries of the South, especially the kind that supports independent political work that aims to guarantee an open civil society, this non-controversial approach of the EU and its member states and many other donors is deeply concerning.

Even more immediate than limiting the development of a culture of philanthropy in the Global South, when funding is cut in the North this can only mean that funding will be cut in the South, too.²² A direct example is President Donald Trump’s decision to increase restrictions to abortions provided with US funding, known as the global gag rule. This measure was re-introduced by Trump to please his supporters and the more conservative sector of the Republican party. It will mean that USD 8.8 billion will not be used in sexual reproductive rights programmes around the world.²³ This decision will impact globally how organisations and movements focusing on women’s health shape their work.

4 • Reputation in peril

About a year ago, a quick conversation with a human rights defender from the Northeast of Brazil provided another angle to this debate on the closing of civic spaces. Sipping unpretentiously on his coffee, he reminded me that the biggest threat to his work was not funding cuts or restrictive regulations on non-profits, but the defamation of his character and his work, which impacted him, his family, their safety and the validity of causes he defended. It did not help that, around the same time, a primetime Brazilian soap opera featured a villain presenting himself as a human rights lawyer, linked to none other than Amnesty International,²⁴ as a disguise for his criminal activities. In addition to the law, society’s perception of those working on behalf of civil society is a critical battleground for the preservation of civic space. Discrediting the courage and the motivation of activists is an age old tactic, as history shows; being the use of the Red Scare discourse to discredit the labour movement is the early 1920s in the US, or in South Africa, during the apartheid regime, to discredit the African National Congress (ANC) and the anti-apartheid movement. As far back as the 1790s, supporters of slavery tried to link abolitionism to Jacobinism, a pejorative expression for radicalism.

While I was working for the Brazil office of a British development organisation, I was able to observe firsthand the restrictive effect of distrust on civil society actors. Often I needed to intervene with a local bank branch, to guarantee the disbursement of funds to small

organisations such as a local women's social movement. The bank manager would enjoy exercising his power and ask for an enormity of documents and references to clear the transfer. His excuse? That he was simply following strict banking regulations, which both he and I knew had little to do with financial responsibility and money laundering risks, but more to do with his judgment of the rural activists, their social class and their work in impoverished regions in the south of Brazil.

Naively, at one point in life I believed activists and social movements from the North were insulated from this kind of harassment and criminalisation that defenders and groups suffer in the South,²⁵ where colonialism, neo-colonialism, authoritarianism and clientelism all play a part in trying to erase dissent. To a generation of activists from the South, the North, especially Europe, had been the *locus* for the institutionalisation of rights-based frameworks and a model to be reached.

However, this struggle for the reputation of civil society is not endemic to the Global South. Despite its stronger democratic heritage, the North is not immune to the undermining of activism²⁶ and the human rights framework. The attacks on the Hungarian civil society²⁷ perpetrated by the current government of Prime Minister Viktor Órban shows this clearly, with constant defamation of organisations, a history of harassment that included an episode of police raidings in 2014 and the adoption of a new and terrible NGO law.²⁸ In Poland, Ukraine, and beyond Eastern Europe, organisations are being discredited in the official discourse as if they were not an integral and crucial part of democracy. And once those discourses are in motion, with restrictive regulations that follow them, it is harder for civil society in the South to point to alternative models of participation and social control when Northern arrangements are eroding fast.

Attacking reputations and delegitimising the role of civil society in the promotion and defense of rights is not unplanned. It is built as a strategic goal for both state and non-state actors that intend to channel efforts and gather public support to focus the agenda on growth, profits and consequently, protecting the interests of a bureaucratic or corporate elite.

Placed between these increasingly colluding sectors of society – the state and business – civil society has a crucial role that was well defined by the then United Nations Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai, “Civil society occupies the space between state and the market, often playing a countervailing as well as a complementary role against the two forces that are increasingly finding common ground and excluding the majority of people.”²⁹

To guarantee that restrictive policies are not met with protests, states – by their own initiative or under pressure from corporations, churches and criminal organisations – are increasingly putting in place mechanisms to silence dissonant voices either by force or by persuasion. It can be the arrest of activists such as the young people protesting the impeachment of Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff, framed by an undercover soldier³⁰ and responding to criminal charges for the intention to commit

violent acts during a march. Or measures that go against a rights-based approach but have popular appeal, such as anti-immigration policies.

There is a battle for narratives that generates an environment in which civil society is viewed with distrust and its demands are not seen as universal, but as claims based on privilege and favour. The just protection of human rights defenders likewise is seen as special treatment.³¹

5 • Dissent is powerful

In order to deal with these increasingly powerful forces, which are less and less worried about the appearance of their intentions and clearly pushing a negative view of civil society, activists need to strengthen themselves and their groups and look to new ways of working.

Historically excluded communities and groups – from the North and South – are demonstrating their power and learning from each other. The indigenous activism against the Dakota Access Pipeline in the US, for example, builds on the resistance of Unist’ot’en in Canada that since 2009 was able to cancel five of the seven pipelines planned for their territory.³² Or the Mesoamerican women like Berta Cáceres,³³ fighting the commodification of nature and natural resources, and inspiring support to their causes and activism in new groups. And the incorporation of new tools for activism, such as the use of internet, to gather support for groups such as the activist Black Lives Matter that has used a strong digital presence and a very recognised *hashtag* to spark public debate and complement its offline organising work for racial justice. Voices that do not find a channel in traditional corporate media are able to find ways to speak and talk about their struggles using the internet.

However, it is building alliances that is critical in this fight to protect civil society, between different movements and also between local, national, regional and international spheres. During my time at the UK development organisation in Brazil, I lost count of how many petitions we were called to sign. It still mattered that an international organisation agreed with the objective of the petition and it did not matter if its funds were involved or not. The Brazilian environmental movement is a good example. It has a history of international engagement, through funding but mostly through political engagement, which has helped to bring legitimacy to its cause. This engagement also helped to provide the rhetoric to criticise the movement, by claiming its international backing is a threat and an interference in the national sovereignty with the foreign interest wanting to control the Amazon. But with these broader alliances, forest protection eventually became seen by the Brazilian public opinion as something important to safeguard, which was never the case with environmental rights defenders. Consequently, Greenpeace is easily able to fundraise for forest protection with individual, Brazilian donors. While fundraising for protection of indigenous groups still requires sources from abroad. This international solidarity helps to influence how public opinion sees their own issues and can still give another layer of legitimacy and validity for the demands raised by local groups.

In this moment of fierce dispute of narratives around the role of the state and the role of civil society, any extra weight is appreciated to help make the case for the protection of civil liberties as a pillar for democracy. International engagement between civil society in the two hemispheres has therefore never been so important. And learning from others carries a renewed importance in such challenging times.³⁴ Groups in the North can benefit greatly from combining their own expertise in carrying out work in more “normal” times together with the enormous experience Southern groups have of dealing with the double burden of not only building strategies for their issues but also for the particular environment in which they operate. Partnerships and solidarity are the nucleus of any response to the threats to civil society. Building bridges with new allies and renewing ties with old ones can provide opportunities to generate knowledge and build narratives that resonate with the public opinion and bring support to holding governments and corporations accountable for their actions when they disrespect rights. Having others support and participate in your struggle will provide a sense of comfort and safety, much needed for activists and defenders dealing with destruction and violence on a daily basis.

NOTES

1 • For more information, read ICNL’s compilation updated on Sep 29, 2017 and available at: “U.S. Protest Law Tracker,” ICNL, 2017, accessed October 26, 2017, http://www.icnl.org/US_protest_law_tracker.pdf.

2 • Despite being part of ILO since 1991, South Korea has not ratified the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Convention No. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise) and No. 98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining), which the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has called Seoul to do in October 2017, after a first unanswered request from 2009. Recommendations available at: “E/C.12/KOR/CO/4,” OHCHR, 2017, accessed October 25, 2017, http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/

<Download.aspx?symbolNo=E%2fC.12%2fKOR%2fCO%2f4&Lang=en>.

3 • “Ratings Update October 2017,” Civicus, Monitor, 2017, accessed October 20, 2017, <https://monitor.civicus.org/Ratingsupdatesept17/>.

4 • For more detailed analysis on the amendments of the FATF Recommendation 8, please refer to the Press Release produced by the Global NPO Coalition on FATF, available at: “NPOs Applaud Important Changes in Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Policy – NPOs No Longer Considered “Particularly” Vulnerable,” FATF Platform, June 29, 2016, accessed November 2, 2017, <http://fatfplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Press-Release.pdf>.

5 • Concerns around FATF recommendations

and their impacts for civil society can be found at the website for the Global NPO Coalition on FATF, available at: "Concerns," FATF Platform, May 13, 2015, accessed November 17, 2017, <http://fatfplatform.org/civil-society-concerns/>.

6 • To understand more of the impact FATF recommendations had on Indian civil society, please read: Seema Nair, "Can Indian NGOs Bank on Banks?" FATF Platform, 2016, accessed November 06, 2017, http://fatfplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/FATF_India_Final.pdf.

7 • Antiterrorism Laws in Chile: Law 18.314 <http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=29731> (1984); Amendment, (1991) <https://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=19027&idVersion=1991-01-24> (1991); Changes to include financing of terrorism in accordance to International Standards, <http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=217096&idVersion=2003-11-13> (2003); 2 amendments, <http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=1017644&idVersion=2011-06-21> and <http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=1026712&idVersion=2011-06-21> (2011).

8 • "Chile Must Stop Using Anti-terrorism Law Against Mapuche Indigenous Group – UN Expert," UN News Centre, July 31, 2013, accessed November 6, 2017, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45538#.WgO0S6uQy2w>.

9 • "The Inter-American Court of Human Rights Condemns the State of Chile for Having Used its Antiterrorist Legislation Against Members of the Mapuche People," FIDH, July 30, 2014, accessed November 6, 2017, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/americas/chile/the-inter-american-court-of-human-rights-condemns-the-state-of-chile>.

10 • "Turkey Jails More Journalists Than Any Other Nation. Those in Detention Are All Terrorists, Erdogan Says," Public Radio International, June 28, 2017, accessed on November 6, 2017, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-06-28/turkey-jails-more-journalists-any-other-nation-those-detention-are-all-terrorists>.

11 • Conectas Human Rights was active in documenting the Antiterrorism law approval and arguments against it. It is available on their website

for consultation. Refer to Conectas Human Rights, Homepage, 2017, accessed November 17, 2017, www.conectas.org; and Conectas Human Rights, Search page, 2017, accessed November 17, <http://www.conectas.org/en/search?q=antiterrorism>.

12 • Beyond country examples, there are numerous studies that provide evidence of the impact of counterterrorism measures on civil society. The Global NPO Coalition on FATF has several resources available on FATF Platform, Homepage, 2017, accessed November 17, 2017, <http://fatfplatform.org/>. Also, a good reference is this recent study published in April 2017 that details the specific impact of those laws and practices on women's rights: "Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security," Duke Law International Human Rights Clinic and Women Peacemakers Program, 2017, accessed November 17, 2017, <https://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/assets/TTPS-DUKE-FINAL-PRINT-AP-WEB.pdf>.

13 • At first, this assumption was raised by Open Society Foundations' Director in Latin America in the blog post: Pedro Abramovay, "Projeto de Lei Sobre Terrorismo: A Culpa é do Levy." Facebook post, August 19, 2015, accessed November 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/quebrandootabu/posts/942594352463619>. Then, the tracking of the legislative procedures linked to the law led to an active participation of the Finance Ministry throughout the entire approval process. Conectas Human Rights is currently producing a comprehensive study on the matter to register all steps and map the main actors.

14 • ODA official data shows the US being the world's largest donor in terms of volume, with USD 33.59 billion in 2016. Source: OECD Tool: "Official Development Assistance 2016 - ODA Overview," Compare Your Country, 2016, accessed November 17, 2017, <http://www2.compareyourcountry.org/oda?cr=oced&lg=en>.

15 • This case is well documented by the Charity &

Security Network in the Know Your Rights series, especially the webinar and factsheet for “Webinar - Are My Peacebuilding Activities Permissible?,” Charity and Security Network, October 17, 2017, accessed October 25, 2017, <https://www.charityandsecurity.org/know-your-rights/permisible-activities>.

16 • In the US, the reaction to the election was immediate. People felt they had to resist what the new administration represented and national and local organisations are seeing their membership spike. One example is the Democratic Socialist Party that in less than a year went from 8,000 members to 25,000, many of them young people that are using tactics from the civil rights movement and combining them with digital organising and promotion tools to grow.

17 • For a deeper analysis of the impacts of this measure, please refer to: Shami Chakrabarti, “The Knives Are Out”, SUR 12, no. 22 (2015): 269-272, accessed November 8, 2017, <http://sur.conectas.org/en/the-knives-are-out/>.

18 • ATTAC, initials for the French founded activist group *Association pour la Taxation des Transactions financières et pour l'Action Citoyenne* or Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizen's Action, gained prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000s for defending the implementation of the Tobin tax on financial transactions and very active in the creation of the World Social Forum movement.

19 • In Germany, in 2014, Frankfurt's tax authorities revoked the public-benefit status of ATTAC retroactively to 2010. The justification was its political stances that did not meet the public-benefit criteria. In 2016, a ruling in favour of the organisation confirmed its status, but the Finance Ministry intervened – even with the case closed, requesting that the Frankfurt office make a complaint that can take another 3 years. During this time, the public interest status would be suspended, as it was during the period of 2014-16 and hurting the organisation financially rendering it unable to issue receipts to individual donors. Read more at: Annika Elena Poppe

and Jonas Wolff, “Germany Sets a Poor Example: The Case of ATTAC in Light of Globally Closing Civic Spaces,” Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, July 27, 2017, accessed September 21, 2017, <https://blog.prif.org/2017/07/27/germany-sets-a-poor-example-the-case-of-attac-in-light-of-globally-closing-civic-spaces/>.

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21 • “Shrinking Space for Civil Society: The EU Response,” European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, April 2017, accessed October 25, 2017, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/578039/EXPO_STU\(2017\)578039_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/578039/EXPO_STU(2017)578039_EN.pdf).

22 • For further information see “Trump's ‘Mexico City Policy’ or ‘Global Gag Rule,’” Human Rights Watch, June 22, 2017, accessed September 21, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/22/trumps-mexico-city-policy-or-global-gag-rule>.

23 • Ariana Eunjung Cha and Carol Morello, “Trump Expansion of Abortion ‘Gag Rule’ Will Restrict \$8.8 Billion in U.S. Aid.” The Washington Post, May 15, 2017, accessed September 21, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/05/15/trump-expansion-of-abortion-gag-rule-will-restrict-8-8-billion-in-u-s-aid/?utm_term=.c46af8467caa.

24 • Amnesty International Brazil released an official statement at the time, disavowing the mention to the organisation in the soap opera *A Regra do Jogo* (The rule of the Game) and complaining of the lack of responsibility in portraying the work of human rights defenders wrongly, contributing to their criminalisation. September 22, 2015. Read: “Nota Pública: Menção à Anistia Internacional na Novela A Regra do Jogo,” Anistia Internacional, September 22, 2015, accessed November 17, 2017, <https://anistia.org.br/noticias/nota-publica-mencao-anistia-internacional-na-novela-regra-jogo/> (in Portuguese).

25 • For a picture on how human rights defenders

are being harassed and responding to threats in Latin America, check this report: "Protection of Human Rights Defenders Against Non State Actors: Context, Analysis and Strategies," The Fund for Global Human Rights and Just Associates, 2017, accessed November 17, 2017, http://globalhumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Protection-of-Human-Rights-Defenders-against-Non-State-Actors_Mesoamerica_FGHR.pdf.

26 · Israel Butler, "Participatory Democracy Under Threat: Growing Restrictions on the Freedoms of NGOs in the EU." Civil Liberties Union for Europe, 2017, accessed September 15, 2017, <https://www.liberties.eu/en/news/participatory-democracy-under-threat-summary>.

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29 · "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association," A/HRC/35/28, United Nations, Human Rights Council, May 8, 2017, accessed September 16, 2017, page. 4/21, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session35/Documents/A_HRC_35_28_AUJ.docx.

30 · "Brazilian Domestic Spies Use Tinder to Infiltrate Protest Movements," Boing Boing, November 15, 2016, accessed October 24, 2017, <https://boingboing.net/2016/11/15/brazilian-domestic-spies-use-t.html>.

31 · A survey conducted by three scholars from the University of Michigan interviewed, in October 2015, 1,200 US citizens to measure what they felt was a proportional response to different protest tactics. The survey found out that people tend to accept

actions that exceed the use of force foreseen in the law, including disappearance and torture in some cases, bringing scholars to the conclusion that US citizens do not like protests; which is a message regularly conveyed by traditional media that focuses coverage on the inconvenience of those gatherings instead of the causes they shed light on. For more information, refer to: Christian Davenport, "This One Chart Shows What Americans Believe About Protests and Police Responses." The Washington Post, July 18, 2016, accessed September 21, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/07/18/heres-one-chart-that-shows-what-americans-believe-about-protests-and-police-responses/>; and Christian Davenport, Dave Armstrong, and Thomas Zeitzoff, "That's Intense! Scaling Perceptions of Challenger and Government Tactics as well as Understanding Contentious Interaction." Research Gate, 2016, accessed September 21, 2017, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305212835_That%27s_Intense_Scaling_Perceptions_of_Challenger_and_Government_Tactics_as_well_as_Understanding_Contentious_Interaction.

32 · To read more about this community, see: James Rowe and Mike Simpson, "Lessons From the Front Lines of Anti-Colonial Pipeline Resistance." October 9, 2017, accessed October 18, 2017, <https://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/lessons-front-lines-anti-colonial-unistoten-pipeline-resistance/>.

33 · To know more about Berta Cáceres and her struggles, read: Patricia Ardón and Daysi Flores, "Berta lives! COPINH continues..." SUR 14, no. 25 (2017): 109-117, accessed October 23, 2017, <http://sur.conectas.org/en/bertha-lives-copin-h-continues/>.

34 · For other examples of movements' responses to backlash, refer to: Semanur Karaman and Ana Cernov, "Our Movements and Collective Struggles Thrive Despite Backlash." Open Democracy, September 6, 2016, accessed September 20, 2017, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/semanur-karaman-ana-cernov/our-movements-and-collective-struggles-thrive-despite-backlash>.



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