

UN condemns alleged reprisals against human rights activists in India and 37 other countries

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, in his annual report, expressed concerns about extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary arrests of activists.

The United Nations has listed 38 countries, including India, Israel, Japan and Russia, where human rights activists are allegedly intimidated and face reprisals for cooperating with the world body and its representatives.

In his [annual report](#), United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has expressed concern about extrajudicial killings, torture and random arrests of human rights activists by governments and non-state actors in these countries.

The report mentions the reprisals against Kashmiri human rights activist Khurram Parvez. From June 2016 to April 2018, he was a source of information for a [report](#) prepared by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir. “He has reportedly suffered reprisals for his assistance,” wrote Guterres.

The report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which was published in June, detailed rights violations on both sides of the Line of Control. India [rejected](#) the report and called it fallacious.

Guterres said a group claiming to be affiliated to the Islamic State is spreading defamatory content about Parvez and has issued death threats to him and his family. A similar report published last year had detailed how Parvez was arbitrarily [arrested](#) and detained, the UN secretary general said.

Guterres’ report expressed concern at the Indian government’s use of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act to restrict the work of non-governmental organisations cooperating with the United Nations. The world body listed reprisals against lawyer and activist Henri Tiphagne of the Centre for Promotion of Social Concerns and Nobokishore Urikhimbam of the Centre for Social Development.

Last year, the Human Rights Watch [accused](#) the Indian government of misusing the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act to block foreign financial aid received by civil society groups critical of the government’s policies. In recent years, the Ministry of Home Affairs has cracked down on thousands of non-profit

organisations that receive funds from abroad and has cancelled their licences. The organisations and activists have accused the government of suppressing dissenting voices.

“The world owes it to those brave people standing up for human rights, who have responded to requests to provide information to and engage with the United Nations, to ensure their right to participate is respected,” wrote Guterres.

UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Andrew Gilmour will present the report to the Human Rights Council next week.

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