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Myanmar

Severe human rights abuses, repression and atrocities continue in Myanmar as fighting persists between the Myanmar military (the Tatmadaw) and non-state armed groups, which are increasingly capturing territory from the military.

At particular risk are the Rohingyas, who are being forcibly conscripted by the Tatmadaw while simultaneously facing violence by ethnic armed groups like the [Arakan Army](#), which has taken control of most of Rakhine State. Thousands of Rohingyas have crossed the border to Bangladesh, joining camps where [displaced Rohingyas](#) remain years after the systematic attacks of 2017. The camps are already overcrowded and face a shortage of essential supplies and services, which may be exacerbated by large increases in refugees from Rakhine.

Some of those fleeing have been pushed back from Bangladesh into Myanmar, putting them at risk. Meanwhile, massive civil unrest has engulfed Bangladesh since student protests in July led to the resignation of the Prime Minister and the instalment of an interim government. Continuing ethnic and religious tensions in Bangladesh and a government preoccupied with internal issues may reduce the capacity and willingness to respond to the humanitarian situation for Rohingyas in the camps and to assist those attempting to escape from the violence in Rakhine.

Over the past months, the Myanmar military has conducted aerial [bombing campaigns](#),

indiscriminately attacking towns, destroying civilian infrastructure, and displacing thousands.

According to the [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), as of September 2024, more than 3.3 million Burmese have been displaced, over half the population is living below the poverty line, and at least 5,350 civilians have been killed since the 2021 coup.

In addition, new evidence has been collected of severe [torture](#) techniques used against those in detention, including sexual assault. As more people attempt to flee the country to avoid the Conscription Law of February 2024, the military has increased its [crackdowns](#), preventing young people from leaving on visitor or [work visas](#). Further, Thailand detained nearly 200,000 Myanmar citizens during a recent crackdown on migrant workers, [deporting thousands](#) back to Myanmar, where they face forced conscription to the military. The situation for Myanmar civilians has been exacerbated by [Typhoon Yagi](#) which hit Myanmar in September, killing hundreds and affecting over 600,000 people. Landslides have led to villages being completely cut off from services or assistance; the [humanitarian situation](#) remains dire.

Tatmadaw leader Min Aung Hlaing has announced an [election](#) in 2025, which the National Unity Government and international community fear will not be held in a free and fair manner.

Of immediate concern is the junta's launch of a country-wide [census](#) which will collect personal details of the population, and is feared could be used to increase surveillance of civilians for forced conscription purposes, to crack down on

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Killed in two attacks in Papua New Guinea

10,000

[North Korean troops sent to Russia](#)

570,000

[Displaced in Rakhine State](#)

opposition, and to scrutinise the citizenship rights of ethnic minority groups.

The likelihood of further atrocities by all parties to the conflict remains extremely high amid ongoing armed conflict, targeting of ethnic and religious minorities, massive displacement, and a worsening humanitarian situation due to Typhoon Yagi and potential further natural disasters during monsoon season. The risk is further amplified by the unstable situation in Bangladesh which currently provides safe haven for thousands of Rohingyas, and new initiatives that could strengthen the Tatmadaw's control, especially the census process.

Papua New Guinea

Deadly tribal violence broke out near the controversial Canadian-owned Porgera gold mine in September, with at least [30 people killed](#).

This latest in a series of episodes of tribal violence and massacres in PNG relates to disputes over the ownership of the mine, and accusations of illegal miners and settlers "terrorising" local communities and traditional landowners.

In addition to gun violence, buildings were set on fire and basic services were forced to shut, with the UN raising concerns about a [humanitarian crisis](#).

One month later, gunmen ambushed a public bus in the Porgera area, killing seven people and seriously injuring several others. [Local communities](#) fear further attacks, despite government commitments to extend the state of emergency and empower police to make arrests. Violence between illegal miners and security forces has also [erupted](#), with six shot and dozens arrested.

This pattern of tribal violence and retribution, frequency of massacres, and nature of attack with firearms, puts PNG at extremely high risk of further atrocities.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is a highly militarised authoritarian society plagued by widespread [human rights abuses](#), forced conscription and institutionalised [forced labour](#).

The [Report of the UN Secretary General](#) on the situation of human rights in the DPRK released in August 2024 found increased limitations on freedom of movement and repression of freedom of expression, with a range of laws limiting the flow of information and stricter penalties for those violating the law. Surveillance of personal devices and restrictions on “illegal propaganda” have increased with legislation such as “The Law on Rejecting Reactionary Thought and Culture”, the violation of which could attract life imprisonment or the death penalty. Parents can also be punished for alleged violations by their children.

In 2023, [196 people](#) escaped the DPRK but the government has strengthened border fencing and surveillance via patrols and guard posts. Illegal border crossings are considered treasonous, and those who are caught or repatriated (such as hundreds of North Korean nationals sent back from China), are met with severe punishments and torture.

North Korea has recently strengthened its ties with Russia with a [defence pact](#) that commits to reciprocal military assistance and continued weapons trading. Further, 10,000 [North Korean troops](#) have been sent to Russia for training and potential deployment to the frontlines in the war in Ukraine.

These developments may foreshadow increased Russian support for Pyongyang in future conflicts and potential for the Russia-Ukraine war to [spread](#) or draw in South Korea and its allies in the Asia Pacific. DPRK has recently made [constitutional amendments](#) that include naming South Korea as a hostile state, and has destroyed transport connections between the two countries.

In addition to ongoing [crimes against humanity](#) within North Korea, there is increased risk of its participation in atrocities as part of the Russian war in Ukraine, as well as soldiers returning with increased military expertise that may be used in future conflicts in the region.

In August 2022, the UN issued a landmark report that [determined](#) that the Chinese government's treatment of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang may constitute crimes against humanity.

China's repressive laws and policies—purported to combat violent extremism and promote national security—[remain in place](#).

Though China has discontinued some of the most overt forms of oppression linked to the [mass extrajudicial detention](#) of Uyghurs, the Uyghur community continues to face systematic persecution and largescale imprisonment in China's criminal justice and [forced labour](#) systems. Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang are subject to discriminatory and disproportionately harsh [prison sentences](#) and are incarcerated at a rate [47 times higher](#) than China's majority Han ethnic group, accounting for 34% of China's estimated prison population despite comprising only one percent of China's total population.

The Chinese government has also recently upscaled its sophisticated campaign of [transnational repression](#) of Uyghurs living abroad, including [unprecedented harassment](#) of groups that advocate for Uyghur human rights.

Fifteen countries issued a [joint statement](#) at the UN General Assembly on 22 October urging China to address continued serious human rights violations in Xinjiang, highlighting forced labour; large-scale arbitrary detention; enforced disappearances; family separation; systematic and discriminatory surveillance; restrictions on cultural, religious, and linguistic identity and expression; torture and sexual and gender-based violence, including forced abortion and sterilisation; and the destruction of religious and cultural sites.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) [Entity List](#) now has 75 companies said to be using forced labour by Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

Given the scale and systematic nature of human rights abuses of Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups, the risk of further atrocity crimes in China remains high.

Indonesia

The inauguration of Prabowo Subianto as President of Indonesia in October has raised [concerns](#) about the potential for a crackdown on freedoms and increased authoritarianism in the country.

President Prabowo, a former military general with a notorious [human rights record](#), assumes Indonesia's highest office at a time of ongoing [democratic backsliding](#), [shrinking civic space](#), and increased [threats to journalists](#) and freedom of the press. His nationalist-populist Gerindra Party played a key role in passing the controversial new [criminal code](#) in late 2022. This new code will come into effect in January 2026—roughly a year into Prabowo's 5-year term—and includes provisions that can be used to suppress legitimate criticism of the government and restrict fundamental rights, particularly [sexual and gender-based rights](#).

Prabowo entered office amidst [increased military presence](#) and repression in West Papua. In May 2024, the [UN Human Rights Committee](#) noted “systematic reports about the use of torture” against Indigenous Papuans, and Indonesia continues to prohibit or limit media and human rights groups from entering or reporting on the situation in West Papua. Up to 100,000 West Papuans are displaced by previous conflict, and [racism](#) and discrimination against Indigenous Papuans continues, often coupled with violence by Indonesian authorities.

There are concerns the situation in Papua may [deteriorate](#) further under President Prabowo. The potential for further restrictions on human rights and freedoms, coupled with Indonesia's [history of atrocities](#) and increased militarisation and human rights violations in Papua, constitute significant [structural risk factors](#) for atrocity crimes in Indonesia.