

*A world without genocide - making it our legacy*

## The **TRANSNATIONAL** Issue **REPRESSION**

### Foreign Governments Persecuting Their Own – HERE

by Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Executive Director

People flee from genocide, war crimes, and other mass atrocities perpetrated by their own governments. They go to other countries, nearby or far away, in the desperate hope to live in safety and without fear. However, the long arm of their government's agents often reaches out to persecute them in their new home.



This is the crime of transnational repression, and it is occurring in the United States. **A country reaches out to persecute its own people – HERE.**

This is a felony in the US, and perpetrators face harsh punishments.

**Extent.** A recent *Freedom House* report documented at least 854 direct, physical incidents of transnational repression committed by 38 governments in 91 countries since 2014, **including assassinations, abductions, assaults, detentions, and unlawful deportations. The governments of China, Turkey, Tajikistan, Russia, and Egypt ranked as the most prolific perpetrators of transnational repression.**

**Criminal Acts.** Transnational repression may take any of the following forms:

- Stalking
- Harassment
- Electronic hacking
- Physical assaults
- Attempted kidnapping
- Forcing or coercing the victim to return to the home country
- Threatening or detaining family members who have remained in the home country
- Freezing financial assets
- Carrying out online disinformation campaigns
- Threatening the target's children or other family members

**Intent.** Governments attempt to silence oppositional voices of their own citizens (or non-citizens connected to the country), to get information from them or to coerce them to return home.

Foreign governments typically target the following people:

- Political and human rights activists
- Dissidents who oppose the government's policies
- Journalists
- Political opponents
- Religious, national, or ethnic minority groups

**Impact.** The physical and psychological consequences of transnational repression are very severe upon the people targeted by foreign governments' agents. People within a community become suspicious of everyone, and they withdraw from their neighbors and from their communities.

At a national level, this social breakdown strikes at the very essence and heart of what it means to live in a democracy: it reduces openness, collaboration, and trust in institutions and in people. This crime also poses a serious threat to national security.

**Examples.** In testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (12-6-2023), Michael Abramowitz, Freedom House president, detailed heinous examples of transnational repression, including an Iranian plot to kidnap and assassinate a journalist from her Brooklyn home, and assaults on activists in San Francisco protesting human rights violations by the Chinese Communist Party.

On April 17, 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the arrest of 40 officers of China's national police on charges of transnational repression activities targeting people residing in the US, and there have been many other similar arrests.

**Next steps.** World Without Genocide is committed to raising awareness of this crime and the steps to report it safely and confidentially, and to support legislation to strengthen prosecution of the perpetrators and protect targeted individuals and communities.



# Transnational Repression WHO IS NEXT?

The murder on February 16, 2024 of Alexey Navalny, the iconic Russian pro-democracy advocate and decade-long political opponent of Vladimir Putin, has shocked the world.

Navalny hoped that after his death, a hundred new heroes would take his place. We worry that his death will lead to more deaths and more silencing.

A week after Navalny's death, more than

400 people in Russia had been arrested for laying flowers at memorial sites.

Elections in Russia on March 15-17 have extended Putin's rule until 2030 in this exercise in voting futility.

**We worry that the long arm of Putin and his agents will not only endanger opposition voices in Russia but will also reach out to attack Navalny supporters around the world, including in the US.**

Image of Alexey Navalny is courtesy of Mitya Aleshkovskiy, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexey\\_Navalny.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexey_Navalny.jpg) is unchanged and is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

## Document and report any incidents

The FBI investigates potential cases of this felony crime, under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Justice. The FBI website includes information on how to recognize this crime and how to report it safely, confidentially, and anonymously.

The first step in prosecuting perpetrators is for victim-survivors of these attacks to document and report the crimes to the appropriate authorities. However, targeted victims are the very same people who have fled from regimes where police are often agents of repressive governments and victims may be afraid to connect to local or federal authorities in the United States as well.

When these crimes go unreported, it gives the perpetrators impunity to continue their harassment and persecution without any consequences. As a result, the victims may become increasingly frightened of reporting anything to the authorities, and the incidence of overall crime in a community may increase. This endangers everyone, and this is a

threat not only to safety but also to social stability, trust, and cohesion in a community.

We encourage community leaders to establish outreach programs to vulnerable groups and build positive relationships between law enforcement entities and residents from other countries. This is the first step in ending impunity for perpetrators, not only those who carry out crimes of transnational repression, but of any crimes.

The FBI recommends that people who experience, witness, or suspect incidents of transnational repression should do the following:

1. Document the incident.
2. Report the incident to the local police department.
3. Report it to the FBI at [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov) or call 800-225-5324.

## China's Transnational Repression Against Uyghur People in the U.S.

by Tara Kalar, J.D., Kaori Kenmotsu, J.D., and Abigail Hencheck, J.D.

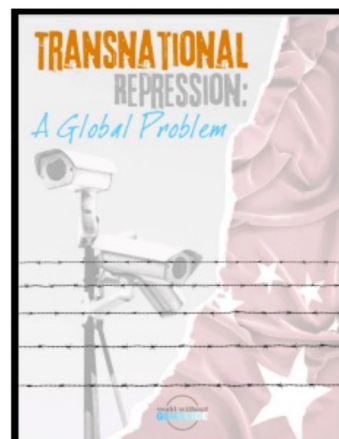
*Our pro bono legal team of Judge Tara Kalar, Department of Human Services; Professor Kaori Kenmotsu, Hamline University; and Abigail Hencheck, staff attorney at Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy; has prepared an in-depth analysis of transnational repression against Uyghur people in the United States.*

China is the world's worst perpetrator of transnational repression, targeting Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hong Kong human rights activists, and others who now reside in the US and elsewhere outside of China.

The Uyghurs are a Turkic Muslim minority group living in China's northwestern Xinjiang province, comprising less than 1% of China's population. Uyghurs in China are subjected to forcible detention in internment camps, slave labor, forced sterilization, illegal harvesting of their body organs, forcible removal of children from families, and sexual violence, abuses labeled genocide in 2021 by the Uyghur Tribunal, an independent UK tribunal.

The Chinese Communist Party, or CCP, doesn't want the world to know and doesn't admit any culpability for these acts of violence. The CCP therefore reaches out to Uyghurs in the diaspora to silence them with threats, harassment, and surveillance to keep them silent.

Read our report on the experiences of Uyghurs in the United States and visit our website to download information and to inform others. Contact us to speak at your organization about preventing transnational repression in the US and how to protect communities that are targeted: [info@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:info@worldwithoutgenocide.org)



Scan QR code below to view the report:



[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/TNR](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/TNR)

# Prosecuting Perpetrators of Transnational Repression

by Kaori Kenmotsu, J.D., and Professor at Hamline University

Kaori Kenmotsu is a member of the pro bono legal team at World Without Genocide examining cases of transnational repression against residents in the US. She will join the Mitchell Hamline School of Law faculty in July 2024.

The incidence of transnational repression has increased worldwide in both frequency and in heinousness of actions against targeted people, as illustrated with the case of Jamal Khashoggi.



**Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist, dissident, columnist for the Washington Post, and an outspoken human rights activist, was assassinated and dismembered at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey in 2018. A subsequent CIA investigation concluded that Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, had ordered the assassination.**

Both the US and Europe are strengthening laws to prosecute and deter transnational repression. U.S. measures include the following:

**1. Federal laws regarding foreign agents.** The US has two laws regulating foreign agents. Political activity is covered under 22 U.S.C. Section 611, the Foreign Agents Registration Act, and nonpolitical activity on behalf of a foreign state is covered by 18 U.S.C. Section 951. Although these two laws have been applied in cases of transnational repression, they are imperfect tools because they do not adequately account for the wide array of tactics that are used.

**2. TRAP Act.** In 2021, Congress passed the Transnational Repression Accountability and Prevention (TRAP) Act. Authoritarian governments have been coopting Interpol's Red Notices, which are international arrest warrants, to harass and target nationals living overseas and to force their return to their countries of origin, an illegal process known as *refoulement*. This Act attempts to counter that cooptation with U.S. influence at Interpol for institutional reform.

See the FBI information at [www.fbi.gov/investigate/counterintelligence/transnational-repression](https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/counterintelligence/transnational-repression)

The image above of Jamal Khashoggi is courtesy of April Brady, POMED. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jamal\\_Khashoggi\\_in\\_March\\_2018.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jamal_Khashoggi_in_March_2018.jpg) is cropped but otherwise unchanged and is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

**3. Khashoggi Ban.** In 2021, in response to Khashoggi's assassination, the US established the Khashoggi Ban, allowing the State Department to impose visa restrictions on individuals who "directly engage in serious, extraterritorial counter-dissident activities, including those that suppress, harass, surveil, threaten, or harm journalists, activists, or other persons perceived to be dissidents." However, the government cannot publicly share the names of those subjected to this ban, reducing its deterrent effect.

**4. Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Acts.** A stronger visa ban option is Section 7031(c) of the State Department Foreign Operations and the Related Programs Appropriations Acts. These allow visa bans against foreign government officials and their family members when there is credible information that the official is involved with corruption or gross violations of human rights and the U.S. government can publicly name sanctioned individuals.

**5. Transnational Repression Policy Act: S831 and HR3654.** This bi-partisan bill, pending as of March 2024, requires the President to impose property and visa sanctions on foreign individuals and entities that engage in transnational repression. It further requires the State Department to enhance international awareness of transnational repression; to protect targeted individuals and groups; and to conduct outreach to those targeted by foreign governments. The State Department and the Department of Justice must train relevant law enforcement partners on transnational repression. The bill also prioritizes identifying those perpetrating transnational repression against communities in the US.

At present, the FBI website highlights five persons who are "wanted" as agents for activities carried out against residents of the US. The website also lists the arrests of dozens of people accused of these crimes, most acting on behalf of China, which carries out 30% of the world's cases of transnational repression.

## Writing to Political Prisoners in Russia

More than 20,000 people, men, women, and children, have been detained in Russia for protesting the war in Ukraine.

World Without Genocide partners with The Museum of Russian Art (TMORA) in Minneapolis and Russians Against War-Minnesota (RAW-MN) to write to some of the detainees. Through RAW-MN, we are able to write letters, in English, that are sent through a secure portal to prisoners, and the prisoners can write back to their new 'pen pals.' Addresses remain confidential.

These programs are open to the public, at no cost, with no advance registration, and no Russian language skill is necessary. We have held letter-writing events at TMORA, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, Mount Zion Temple, Central Baptist Church, the Germanic-American Institute, and at public libraries, representing support from faith, arts, academic, and civic organizations.

These letters maintain contact with prisoners, affirming their democratic ideals and giving them hope. We have learned that

prisoners who receive letters get better treatment from the guards, because the guards know that the world is watching.



This is a small step to support people in Russia who oppose the war, and hundreds of Minnesotans have written words of friendship and encouragement. Events are scheduled through May 2024. We are eager to expand this program's reach across the country.

Please contact [admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org) to arrange a program at your organization in Minnesota or elsewhere.

Visit [www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/letters](https://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/letters) for details on scheduled programs.

# END-OF-LIFE OPTIONS

by Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D.

In a 2023 article, the medical journal *The Lancet* reported that in 2021, nearly 300 million people in 11 countries could define how they wished to die. Those countries include Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Colombia, and Canada.

The four physician authors wrote, “Over the past 20 years, the Western world has come to acknowledge the individual’s autonomy of directing one’s own death, especially in response to terminal illnesses or unbearable symptoms and functional limitations causing intolerable suffering.”

**The United Nations states that bodily autonomy is a fundamental right about individual choice, dignity, power, and agency. We believe this personal integrity must extend throughout the life course.**

In many places, laws allow adults who are medically determined to be terminally ill, mentally capable, and with a prognosis of six months or less to live to request, obtain, and self-ingest medication to die peacefully in their sleep when their suffering, **as they define it**, becomes unbearable. This is known as **Medical Aid in Dying**, or MAID.

There is no federal law in the US, unlike in the countries noted above. However, this option is legal in ten U.S. states and Washington, D.C. It is not legal in Minnesota.

My husband died of multiple myeloma in December 2022. As Minnesota residents, we were without the option to pursue MAID. His dying request of me was to advocate for Minnesota legislation so its residents would have access to MAID should they choose it.



Testimony at House hearing, personal photo

World Without Genocide has joined many other organizations in this advocacy. Our role has involved many steps, and as always, it includes bottom-up advocacy to reach the public and top-down to reach policy leaders and legislators.

- Publication of three op-eds
- Participation in a public panel
- Interview on Minnesota Public Radio and subsequent comments in statewide newspapers
- Interview in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and front-page cover
- Talk for the League of Women Voters
- Television interview, *The Mary Hanson Show*
- Personal testimony at three committee hearings of the Minnesota House of Representatives
- Support for resolutions at Minnesota precinct caucuses and at legislative Town Hall forums

Please contact me to participate in this important legislative advocacy: [kennedy@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:kennedy@worldwithoutgenocide.org)

## Genocide Education Certificate

by Randi Markusen, Associate Director

*Randi Markusen has taught in Denmark, Botswana, and in the US. She also has investigated the impact of genocide and ethnic cleansing on rural communities in former Yugoslavia and she led the development of a clinic in Rwanda for women. She is the co-founder of the Post-Genocide Education Fund, which provides college support to youth who have been orphaned by genocide.*

### What can I do about genocide?

Our Genocide Education Certificate program is designed for the lawyers, students, teachers, social workers, and members of the general public who ask that question.

The program focuses on ways that participants can combine knowledge with action to make powerful changes in their own local corners of the world and beyond.

Participants will learn about past and current genocides, mechanisms of transitional justice, and post-genocide community healing and restoration from renowned scholars, legal experts, and human rights activists. I work with each participant to create a unique plan based on their interests, experience, and current issues.

**Components.** There are three parts to the program, and they involve learning from others, thoughtful written reflection, and taking action.

1. Attend 8 World Without Genocide webinars and read short articles on critical issues.
2. Write a paper about the themes of the webinars.
3. Create and implement an action agenda.

**Knowledge is not power.  
Knowledge plus action equals power.**

**Registration and Fees.** Participants may register and start at any time, with two years to complete the required components. Fees are due at the time of registration: \$125 for students, \$250 for others. Interested individuals may enroll online at

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/certificate](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/certificate)

Visit our website for information or contact [admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org) with questions.

Students’ statements are eloquent testimonials to the program outcomes:

*“We can’t pretend that genocides are not unfolding around us. We must confront this. The program provided me with the effective tools to do just that.”*

-Community college instructor

*“The Certificate program deepened my understanding of genocides and other atrocities. But even more important, it has taught me how to advocate for human rights in my sphere of influence.”*

-Graduate student

# Welcome to Brad Lehrman and Holly Dolejsi

In 2003, the century's first genocide began in the Darfur region of Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of people had been killed and millions were displaced from their homes and from their country. But Darfur was receiving almost no mention in the news and generating no national or international response.

Several Minnesota organizations banded together in 2005 to form the Minnesota Interfaith Darfur Coalition to raise awareness and to influence policy and legislation.

**Brad Lehrman** was a co-founder of that group, which included World Without Genocide.

The Coalition's work ultimately became integrated into World Without Genocide, and Brad joined our Board of Directors. He is responsible for our 501(c)(3) status and for many of our foundational policies and directions.

In 2010 he took on a new position with us as *pro bono* counsel, a role he held for nearly 15 years. When he retired from the practice of law at the end of 2023, and as our counsel, he joined us again as a board member.

He is an alumnus of Mitchell Hamline School of Law and a retired partner with the Minneapolis firm of Soffer Lehrman Law Group, where he practiced in corporate finance and entrepreneurial venture.

Brad has also dedicated much of his career to serving in a leadership role as a board member to five private companies and eight nonprofit organizations, including the *Minneapolis Jewish Community Center*, *Midwest Anti-Defamation League*, *Round Earth Media*, and *The Advocates for Human Rights*. He has received the statewide "50 over 50" Award from Pollen MN and AARP for his significant leadership and contributions to the innovation community.

**We are pleased to welcome Brad Lehrman back to the board!**



With Brad's conclusion as our *pro bono* counsel, we considered likely candidates who would continue Brad's legacy of commitment and dedication to our mission and to timely engagement with any legal issues that arise.

**Holly Dolejsi was the perfect choice.**

She was profiled in 2023 by the American Bar Association in a feature titled *Meet 12 Lawyers Who Inspire Us*, and Holly indeed is inspirational.

Like Brad, Holly is a graduate of Mitchell Hamline School of Law. She is a partner at Robins, Kaplan LLP, where she has been since 2011, and helping others is at the center of Holly Dolejsi's practice.

Her legal successes are legendary, including a case addressing the opioid epidemic. She was a leader on the team representing 28 tribal nations that claimed pharmaceutical manufacturers misrepresented the risks of long-term opioid use. In 2022, Holly's team secured a \$589 million settlement on behalf of all federally recognized tribes.

She also represented the state of Minnesota in litigation against Juul Labs and Altria for deceptive marketing of e-cigarettes to youth. The companies agreed to a settlement of \$60.5 million to the state, the largest per capita award of all 48 states and territories that have settled with Juul.

Holly has made *pro bono* work, especially assisting transgender and nonbinary individuals, a key focus of her practice.

She also has expanded opportunities for women lawyers to become more involved with the profession. Many legal conferences, although interesting and informative, were dominated by male lawyers, and women attendees often felt intimidated. In 2017, Holly and some colleagues created a new conference to enhance women lawyers' networking and professional relationships, and the resulting free Women Trial Lawyers Conference is now in its seventh year.

**We are honored and proud that Holly Dolejsi is our new pro bono counsel.**

## Genocide and Justice:

*From Nuremberg to the International Criminal Court*

Our traveling exhibit has been on view at the Minnesota State Capitol twice, Mount Zion Temple, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Blake School, Macalester College, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, Park Square Theatre, Norway House, Reformation Lutheran Church, and Edina City Hall.

This compelling exhibit, a series of 20 tall banners, examines 20th-century genocides, trials of accused perpetrators of genocide, and 'upstanders,' courageous men and women who have challenged and changed the global legal system to promote human rights.

The exhibit features information about the Holocaust and the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, and in Darfur, the first genocide of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Trials are highlighted of the accused at Nuremberg after World War II,

the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia, and the International Criminal Court, illustrating efforts to end impunity for genocide and other atrocity crimes over the past 75 years.

**We must make 'never again' mean 'never.'**

The exhibit is available for rent by faith, civic, arts, and educational organizations. Contact [admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org) for more information.





AT MITCHELL HAMLINE SCHOOL OF LAW

protect. prevent. prosecute. remember.

875 Summit Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

PRESORTED  
NON-PROFIT  
US POSTAGE PAID  
TWIN CITIES  
PERMIT NO 32772

## World Without Genocide

# PROGRAMS

March-May 2024

We offer many programs on human rights topics. Please join us for the upcoming webinars. Details may change; please check the website for updates.

### Bodily Autonomy:

#### From Reproductive Rights to End-of-Life Options

Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 7:00-9:00 pm CT on Zoom.

Registration by Wednesday, March 27, 5:00 pm CT at

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/autonomy](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/autonomy)

### Whose Stories?

#### The Holocaust Survivor, the Girl, and the Legacy

Sunday, April 21, 2024, 1:00-2:30 pm CT on Zoom.

Registration is required by Sunday, April 21, noon CT at

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/generations](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/generations)

#### Genocide on Trial: Israel, Russia, China, Myanmar, and Serbia

Tuesday, May 14, 7:00-8:00 pm CT.

Registration is required by Tuesday, May 14, 5:00 pm CT at

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/trial](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/trial)

### Webinar Costs and Credits

Webinars are open to all: \$10 general public, \$5 students (over age 13) & seniors, \$25 for Minnesota lawyers seeking CLE credits; free for Mitchell Hamline students. 'Clock hours' available for Minnesota teachers, nurses, and social workers. These are 'live' webinars and recordings are not available.

For information email [admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org) or call 952-693-5206.



TMORA  
The Museum of Russian Art



## WRITE TO POLITICAL PRISONERS IN RUSSIA

Sunday, April 14, 2024

10:00 - 11:30 am CT

Mount Zion Temple, Margolis Hall

1300 Summit Ave., St. Paul



Join us to write letters to political prisoners in Russia. Prisoners getting letters receive better treatment because guards know that the prisoners aren't alone.

Letters are sent electronically to a secure portal in Russia. Prisoners are able to safely write back. Reply letters are translated and sent to the original 'pen pal' writers.

There is no fee. Materials are provided. Russian language skills are not needed. Everyone is welcome. Diversity credits are available for Mitchell Hamline students. Registration is not required.

Contact [info@worldwithoutgenocide.org](mailto:info@worldwithoutgenocide.org) for more details. This event is co-sponsored by Mount Zion Temple.

## LET THEM KNOW THEY ARE NOT ALONE.

Additional letter-writing events will be held on the following dates:

Saturday, April 20, 1:00-3:00 pm, St. Cloud Public Library

Saturday, May 18, 1:00-3:00 pm, Washburn Public Library, Mpls.

See additional details on page 3.

## Learn more about WORLD WITHOUT GENOCIDE

Join our email list at

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/news](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/news)

Follow us:



World Without Genocide is formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications and in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2022.