

## Human Rights Record of the United States in 2012

### State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China

#### Foreword

The State Department of the United States recently released its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, posing as "the world judge of human rights" again. As in previous years, the reports are full of carping and irresponsible remarks on the human rights situation in more than 190 countries and regions including China. However, the U.S. turned a blind eye to its own woeful human rights situation and never said a word about it. Facts show that there are serious human rights problems in the U.S. which incur extensive criticism in the world. The Human Rights Record of the U.S. in 2012 is hereby prepared to reveal the true human rights situation of the U.S. to people across the world by simply laying down some facts.

The human rights situation in the U.S. in 2012 has deeply impressed people in the following aspects:

-- Firearms-related crimes posed serious threat to the lives and personal security of citizens in the U.S. Some shootings left astonishing casualties, such as the school shooting in Oakland, the Century 16 theater shooting in Colorado and the school shooting in Connecticut.

-- In the U.S., elections could not fully embody the real will of its citizens. Political contributions had, to a great extent, influenced the electoral procedures and policy direction. During the 2012 presidential election, the voter turnout was only 57.5 percent.

-- In the U.S., citizens' civil and political rights were further restricted by the government. The government expanded the scope of eavesdropping and censoring on personal telecommunications. The police often abused their power, resulting in increasing complaints and charges for infringement upon civil rights. The proportion of women in the U.S. who fell victims of domestic violence and sexual assault kept increasing.

-- The U.S. has become one of the developed countries with the greatest income gap. In 2011, the Gini index was 0.477 in the U.S. and about 9 million people were registered as unemployed; About 16.4 million children lived in poverty and, for the first time in history, public schools reported more than one million homeless children and youth.

-- There was serious sex, racial and religious discrimination in the U.S. Indigenous people suffered serious racial discrimination and their poverty rate doubled the national average. A movie produced by a U.S. director and aired online was deemed insulting to the Prophet Mohammed, sparking protests by the Muslims worldwide.

-- The U.S. seriously infringed upon human rights of other nations. In 2012, U.S. military operations in Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan caused massive civilian casualties. U.S. soldiers had also severely blasphemed against local residents' religion by burning copies of the Muslim holy book, the Koran, and insulting bodies of the dead. There was a huge rise in birth defects in Iraq since the war against Iraq with military actions in which American forces used metal contaminant-releasing white phosphorus shells and depleted uranium bombs.

-- The U.S. was not able to effectively participate in international cooperation on human rights. To date, the U.S. remains a country which has not participated in or ratified a series of core UN conventions on human rights, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### **I. On Life and Personal Security**

The U.S. was haunted by serious violent crimes in 2012 with frequent occurrence of firearms-related criminal cases. Its people's lives and personal security were not duly protected.

According to statistics released by the FBI in September 2012, an estimated 1,203,564 violent crimes occurred in the U.S. in 2011, about 386.3 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants. Aggravated assaults accounted for 62.4 percent of violent crimes reported to law enforcement. Robbery reached 29.4 percent of violent crimes, forcible rape accounted for 6.9 percent, and murder amounted to 1.2 percent of

estimated violent crimes in 2011. And firearms were used in 67.7 percent of the nation's murders, 41.3 percent of robberies, and 21.2 percent in all crimes in the U.S.

Americans are the most heavily armed people in the world per capita. According to a CNN report on July 23, 2012, there were an estimated 270 million guns in the hands of civilians in the U.S. and more than 100,000 people were shot by guns each year. In 2010, there were more than 30,000 deaths caused by firearms. However, the U.S. government has done little in gun control. In 2008 and 2010 landmark Supreme Court rulings on two firearms-related cases dramatically diminished the authority of state and local governments to limit gun ownership. Roughly half of the 50 U.S. states have adopted laws allowing gun owners to carry their guns openly in most public places. And many states have 'stand your ground' laws that allow people to kill if they come under threat, even, in some cases, if they can escape the threat without violence. According to an article on the website of the Hindu on August 7, 2012, in population-adjusted terms, civilians in some parts of the U.S. are more likely to become the victim of a firearms-related murder than their counterparts in war-torn regions like Iraq or Afghanistan. On January 16, 2013, the U.S. president announced 23 steps on gun control to take immediately without congressional approval. And the president signed three of the measures. But the public opinion generally believes that the gun-control measures will encounter great resistance.

According to a report on the USA Today's website on October 17, 2012, the violent crime rate went up 17 percent in 2011. Firearms-related violent crimes posed as one of the most serious threats to the lives and personal security of the U.S. citizens. Statistics showed that an estimated 14,612 people fell victims of murder in 2011 and 9,903 of them were firearms-related murder victims (Website of the Congressional Research service, [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org), November 14, 2012). The U.S. witnessed more firearms-related violent crimes in 2012. According to NYPD statistics published on September 2, 2012, there had been 1,001 shootings so far that year in New York, about 3.4 percent more than the 968 reported at the same time the previous year (NY Daily News, September 9, 2012). According to statistics from the website of Chicago Police Department, there were 2,460 shooting incidents in Chicago in 2012, up 10 percent year on year. Some of the shootings were quite bloody and terrifying, such as the movie theater shooting in Colorado and the school shooting in Connecticut.

On July 20, 2012, James E. Holmes, 24, entered a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, carrying an AR-15 rifle, a 12-gauge shotgun and at least one handgun. He sprayed people at the theater who were watching a movie, leaving at least 12 dead and 59 wounded. A witness said: "He was just literally shooting everyone, like hunting season." According to a CNN report on July 21, law enforcement documents showed that the weapons were purchased legally by Holmes at sporting goods stores in the Denver area over a six-month period before the shooting happened. According to a CNN report on July 23, in wake of the shooting rampage in Colorado, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said: "I don't think there's any other developed country in the world that has remotely the problem we have."

On December 14, 2012, 20-year-old Adam Lanza fatally shot 20 children and six adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. He committed suicide after that. But before he came to the school, he had shot and killed his mother. The incident was the second deadliest school shooting in the U.S. history, after the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre which left 32 killed.

## **II. On Civil and Political Rights**

The recent years have seen closer surveillance of American citizens by the U.S. government. In the country, abuse of suspects and jail inmates is common occurrence, and equal suffrage enjoyable by citizens continues to be undermined.

The U.S. government continues to step up surveillance of ordinary Americans, restricting and reducing the free sphere of the American society to a considerable extent, and seriously violating the freedom of citizens. The U.S. congress approved a bill in 2012 that authorizes the government to conduct warrantless wiretapping and electronic communications monitoring, a move that violates people's rights to privacy. According to a report carried on May 4, 2012 by the CNET website, the FBI general counsel's office has drafted a proposed law requiring that social-networking websites and providers of VoIP, instant messaging, and Web e-mail to alter their code to ensure their products are wiretap-friendly (news.cnet.com, May 4, 2012). Documents released by the American Civil Liberties Union on September 27, 2012, reveal that federal law enforcement agencies are increasingly monitoring American's electronic communications. Between 2009 and 2011, the Justice Department's combined number of original orders for "pen registers" and "trap and trace devices" used to spy on phones increased by 60 percent, from 23,535 in 2009 to 37,616 in

2011. The number of authorizations the Justice Department received to use these devices on individuals' email and network data increased 361 percent between 2009 and 2011. The National Security Agency collects purely domestic communications of Americans in a "significant and systematic" way, intercepting and storing 1.7 billion emails, phone calls and other types of communications every day. A Wired investigation published in March 2012 revealed the NSA is currently constructing a huge data center in Utah, meant to store and analyze "vast swaths of the world's communications" from foreign and domestic networks (The Guardian, July 10, 2012). As the American Civil Liberties Union explained in its December 2011 report, the U.S. could potentially use military drones to spy on its citizens (Fars News Agency, June 26, 2012).

On September 17, 2012, on the first anniversary of Occupy Wall Street's initial demonstration, confrontations between protesters and police around the Wall Street resulted in the arrests of more than 100 people (The New York Times, September 17, 2012). The U.S. journalist community is worried about the continued toughening up of legislation on mass media. It is frequent that journalists in the U.S. lose their jobs because of "politically incorrect" opinions ([www.mid.ru](http://www.mid.ru), October 22, 2012).

Complaints and allegations of American police violating rights of suspects and jail inmates are going up. A litany of lawsuits was brought against the New York City Police Department, with police officers charged with violating civil rights in law enforcement. According to a report carried by the Chicago Tribune on March 6, 2012, jail inmate Eugene Gruber, 51, was paralyzed a day after he walked into a jail where he was believed to have been maltreated. He died of injury four months after the jail incident. Another report by the Chicago Tribune on March 21, 2012 showed that suspect Darrin Hanna suffered trauma from physical restraint and Taser shocks during a struggle with North Chicago police and died a week later. The CNN reported on May 17, 2012 that some 9.6 percent of the prisoners in state prisons are sexually victimized during confinement, more than double the rate cited in a report on the subject in 2008. In Texas state prisons, many inmates are housed in triple-digit temperatures in Fahrenheit. Four inmates -- Larry Gene McCollum, 58; Alexander Togonidze, 44; Michael David Martone, 57; and Kenneth Wayne James, 52 -- died in summer of 2011 from heat stroke, and at least five others were believed to have died from heat-related causes ([www.texascivilrightsproject.org](http://www.texascivilrightsproject.org), July 7, 2012).

American citizens have never really enjoyed common and equal suffrage. Despite an increase of over eight million citizens in the eligible population in the U.S. presidential election of 2012, voter turnout registered a drop of five million from four years before, with only 57.5 percent of eligible citizens voting (bipartisanpolicy.org, November 8, 2012). A February 2012 report by the Pew Center said America's voter registration system is plagued with errors and inefficiencies that undermine voter confidence and fuel partisan disputes over the integrity of the country's elections ([www.pewstates.org](http://www.pewstates.org)).

The U.S. election is like money wars, with trends of the country's policies deeply influenced by political donations. The 2012 election had an estimated cost totaling six billion U.S. dollars. The Obama campaign and the Democratic camp raised 1.06 billion dollars, and the Romney campaign and the Republican camp raised a total of 954 million dollars ([www.standard.co.uk](http://www.standard.co.uk), November 6, 2012). Both groups have funding support from business giants. An opinion poll showed that nearly 90 percent of Americans believe the 2012 election is marked by too many political donations from business circles, which will mean the increased influence of the rich over the country's policy-making (The International Herald Leader [Chinese newspaper], November 16, 2012). A Harvard professor said America's political system is sinking into serious crisis as it is under manipulation of interest groups and their sponsors. Election donations give a loose rein to all other defects. American politics are corroding the people, making them increasingly dependent on interest groups (Internationale Politik, November & December issue, 2012).

Citing a world-known analyst, the Christian Science Monitor website in a report on November 5, 2012 said America's trouble-prone voting machines, the risk of tampering in those machines, the lack of transparency in vote tabulation, and then the Electoral College system, combine to give the country an election system that leaves much to be desired.

### **III. On Economic and Social Rights**

To date, the U.S. government has not approved the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was already ratified by 160 countries. Many American citizens could not enjoy the internationally-recognized economic and social rights.

Unemployment in the U.S. has long been high. A huge number of Americans newly joined the unemployed population in recent years. Figures released by the U.S. Department of Labor on May 4, 2012 showed that in April 2012 the unemployment rate was 8.1 percent, with 12.5 million people unemployed. Citing a report, the Huffington Post website in a story dated December 3, 2012 said nearly 6.5 million U.S. teens and young adults are neither in school nor working, and the employment rate for teens between the ages of 16 and 19 has fallen 42 percent over the last decade. The Los Angeles Times in a report published on April 27, 2012 said the unemployment rate for veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq is 10.3 percent, and for veterans aged 24 and under, the rate is 29.1 percent. It is also hard for college graduates to find jobs. The Associated Press reported on April 22, 2012 that 53.6 percent of bachelor's degree-holders under the age of 25 in America were jobless or underemployed in 2011. Of the nearly 20 million people employed by the American food industry, just 40 percent are earning enough to put them over the local poverty line ([www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com), June 6, 2012).

Poverty in the U.S. has increasingly worsened since the economic crisis in 2008. America's poverty rate in 2011 was 15 percent, with 46.2 million people in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau data released on September 12, 2012. Almost 18 million American homes struggled to find enough to eat in 2011, including 6.8 million households that worried about having enough money to buy food several months out of the year ([www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov), September 5, 2012). A report carried by the Huffington Post on October 30, 2012 indicated that the U.S. has a staggering 22 percent of its children living in poverty. The U.S. is one of those that have the highest child poverty rates of all developed nations.

The gap between the rich and poor is growing in the U.S. over the years. The U.S. has the fourth worst income inequality compared to other developed countries, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. America's Gini index was 0.477 in 2011 and income inequality increased by 1.6 percent between 2010 and 2011, indicating a widened rich-poor gap. Between 2010 and 2011, the share of aggregate income increased 1.6 percent for the quintile with the highest household income, and increased 4.9 percent for the top five percent households. The aggregate share of income declined for the middle quintile. The changes in the shares of aggregate income for the lowest two quintiles were not statistically significant ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), September 12, 2012).

A huge number of people are homeless in the U.S. According to a report released by National Alliance to End Homelessness on January 17, 2012, the nation had 636,017 homeless people in 2011, including 107,148 chronically homeless people. There were 21 homeless people per 10,000 people in the general population. Nearly four in 10 homeless people were unsheltered. The unsheltered population was 243,701 in 2011, up 2 percent from 2009. In April 2012, the New York City homeless shelter population was 10 percent higher than the previous year ([www.coalitionforthehomeless.org](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org), June 8, 2012). Homeless people suffer discrimination and assaults. Citing a survey of 234 cities, a USA Today report dated February 15, 2012 said 24 percent of the U.S. cities prohibit begging, 22 percent prohibit loitering, 16 percent labels sleeping in public places as illegal. From 1999 through 2010, the homeless faced 1,184 acts of reported violence resulting in 312 deaths.

The U.S. is among the few developed countries without health insurance covering its whole population. A considerable number of Americans have no access to necessary healthcare services when in illness because of having no health insurance. The number of people without health insurance coverage was 48.6 million in 2011, accounting for 15.7 percent of the population ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), September 12, 2012). A Huffington Post report on November 13, 2012 said about 115,000 women in the U.S. lose their private health insurance each year in the wake of divorce, largely because they have trouble paying premiums for private insurance. A study, released on June 20, 2012, by the consumer advocacy group Families USA, estimates that a total of 26,100 people aged 25 to 64 died for lack of health coverage in 2010, up 31 percent from 18,000 in 2000 ([www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), June 20, 2012).

#### **IV. On Racial Discrimination**

The long-existing racial discrimination prevalent in the U.S. society sees no improvements, and ethnic minorities do not enjoy equal political, economic and social rights.

Ethnic Americans' rights to vote are limited. During the presidential election in November 2012, some Asian-American voters were obstructed at voting stations and received with discriminations (The China Press, November 8, 2012). The United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur used to lodge a joint accusation against the U.S. of failing to fully guarantee the rights to vote of African-Americans



and Hispanics. The January/February 2013 edition of the Boston Review reported that as of 2010, more than 5.85 million American citizens were disenfranchised because of criminal convictions, and more than two million African-Americans currently are stripped of their right to vote. The U.S. attorney general also acknowledged, as the rights to vote of some ethnic Americans were restricted by laws requiring proof of identity, some people are as a matter of fact stripped of such rights (The Guardian, May. 30, 2012).

Ethnic Americans are discriminated against in the job market, and their economic well-being worsens as a result. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor, the unemployment rate of whites was registered 7.0 percent in Oct. 2012, 14.3 percent for African-Americans and 10.0 percent for Hispanics. The average period of unemployment for ethnic minorities is notably longer than that for whites. Asians are unemployed on average for 27.7 weeks, African-Americans for 27 weeks (Desert News, December 4, 2012). According to data from the federal Labor Department, over half of all African-Americans and non-Hispanic blacks in New York city, who were old enough to work, had no jobs in 2012, and it takes them almost a full year on average to find another job (Madame Noire, June 21, 2012). Employment discrimination is the main reason behind income disparity and poverty. According to statistics released by the U.S. Census Bureau on September 12, 2012, the median household income for African-Americans was 32,229 U.S. dollars in 2011, less than 60 percent of that of non-Hispanic whites; and the poverty rate for African-Americans stood at 27.6 percent, almost three times of that of non-Hispanic whites.

Racial discrimination is rampant in the field of law enforcement and justice. The Reuters website reported on July 3, 2012, police tend to be more lenient to whites. Out of more than 685,000 police stops in New York City in 2011, more than 85 percent of the stopped were black or Hispanic. Ethnic Americans are often offended by law enforcement authorities. A 21-year-old black man in Arkansas was searched and put into a police car, and later was found shot in the head while handcuffed ([www. telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk), August 8, 2012). The incidence where a 28-year-old black man, Mohamed Bah, was shot dead by New York police outraged the black community (NYDailyNews.com, September 26, 2012). An article on the website of Texas Civil Rights Project on July 24, 2012 said the Austin police' excessive use of force had led to two fatal police shootings of minority suspects since 2011. The president of the Texas Civil Rights Project said that the shooting death of a dog even received more thorough and careful investigation than the death of a black victim.

The New York Times columnist Charles M. Blow wrote an article on January 14, 2013, saying "the idea that progress toward racial harmony would or should be steady and continuous is fraying. And the pillars of the institution -- the fundamental devaluation of dark skin and strained justifications for the unconscionable -- have proved surprisingly resilient."

Religious discrimination is rapidly on the rise, with an increase in insults and attacks against Muslims. Muslims account for less than one percent of the U.S. population, but are involved in 14 percent of religious discrimination cases under investigation of the federal government, and 25 percent of employment-related discrimination cases ([www. sinovision.net](http://www.sinovision.net), March 29, 2011). In September, 2012, a U.S. film director made a film that is insulting to the Prophet Muhammad and posted it online, which triggered waves of protests in the Muslim world. In Houston, a dead pig was left in front of a mosque ([abclocal.go.com](http://abclocal.go.com), December 5, 2012). The U.S. Navy special operations force was reported to use images of gun-holding Muslim women as training targets ([www.nydailynews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com), July 3, 2012). The 57-year-old Muslim, Bashir Ahmad, was stabbed and bitten outside a Mosque by a suspect who shouted anti-Muslim expletive during the attack (Wall Street Journal, November 19, 2012). Since the September 11 attacks, the U.S. Justice Department has investigated more than 800 incidents of violence, vandalism and arson against people believed to be Muslim, Arab or South Asian ([www. reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), March 29, 2011).

Apartheid in fact still exists in the American society. New York Times reported on August 6, 2012 that, the proportion of non-Hispanic black residents on the Upper East Side is only 2.7 percent, and whites 81 percent. Local co-op boards can reject black buyers without giving a reason, and some Upper East Side co-ops have a reputation for rejecting black buyers. A study found that the New York area was the second most segregated for black people and the third most segregated for Hispanic and Asian residents. A superintendent of NASA Real Estate Corporation was sued for refusing to show three African-Americans any openings, claiming no apartments were available for rent, but showing vacancies to white individuals who inquired about the same apartments less than an hour after turning down black renters, saying, "You look like nice people. That's why I show you." ([queenscourier.com](http://queenscourier.com), December 12, 2012) Furthermore, studies found a rising tide of apartheid in the U.S. workplace. Nineteen out of the 58 surveyed industries showed a trend toward racial re-segregation between white men and black men ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), October 25, 2012).

Racial relationship is in tension, and hate crimes take place frequently. The Associated Press reported on October 28, 2012, citing a latest poll, that 51 percent of Americans now express explicit anti-African-American attitudes, three percentage points higher than in 2008. The abc.go.com reported on November 19, 2012, three shop owners of Middle Eastern descent were shot dead in four months in Brooklyn, New York, and the police cannot rule out the possibility of the homicides being racially motivated. Two young white men from Mississippi killed a black man by running a truck over him. The two, since 2011, have frequently assaulted and attacked African-Americans in and around Jackson, Mississippi, using beer bottles, sling shots and motor vehicles, and they often bragged about their exploits (Reuters, December 5, 2012). A white gunman named Wade Michael Page killed six Sikh worshippers at their temple, and his motivation was linked to neo-Nazi propaganda, and he was suspected to be a white supremacist (edition. cnn.com, August 10, 2012).

Native Americans' rights are not properly guaranteed. In 2012, the United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on racism, Mutuma Ruteere, pointed out Navajos, a branch of Native Americans, faced racial discrimination, including the lack of access to justice and legal remedies (United Nations document number A/67/328). United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people, James Anaya, said the ability of Native Americans to use and access their sacred places is often curtailed by mining, logging, hydroelectric and other development projects. He cited research figures of relevant institutions, saying Native Americans' poverty rates nearly double the national average, and their life expectancy is 5.2 years less than the national average. Thirteen percent of Native Americans hold a basic university degree, much lower than the national average, 28 percent. Indigenous women are more than twice as likely as all other women to be victims of violence and one in three of them will be raped during her lifetime (United Nations document number A/HRC/21/47/Add.1).

The rights of illegal immigrants are violated. Deaths often occur in immigration detention centers. United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur Christof Heyns said in his report that deaths occurred in prison-like conditions where detention was neither necessary nor appropriate, and where no proper medical care was provided (United Nations document number A/HRC/20/22/Add.3). U.N human rights experts and South Florida Haitian rights advocates call for the U.S. to suspend all deportations to Haiti, saying the deportations may constitute a human rights

violation, and may place the Haitians in a life-threatening position (The Miami Herald, June 6, 2012).

## **V. On the rights of women and children**

The U.S. remains one of a few countries in the world that have not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women or the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It faces prominent problems in protecting the rights of women and children.

Women face discrimination in employment and payment. Women made up about two-thirds of all workers in the U.S. who were paid minimum wage or less in 2011 and 61 percent of full-time minimum wage workers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics ([www.womensenews.org](http://www.womensenews.org), December 11, 2012). On average, women have to work as far as April 17 into 2012 to catch up with that men earned in 2011, meaning women earned 77 cents to the male dollar. African American women earn 62 cents to the male dollar, Latinas 54 cents. In some states, women of color earn less than half as their male counterparts. Women in Wyoming, the lowest ranking state, earn just 64 cents on the male dollar ([www.womensenews.org](http://www.womensenews.org), April 30, 2012). Voters in Oklahoma approved an amendment to the state's constitution to end affirmative action programs in state government that had been designed to increase the hiring of minorities and women in the state's 115 agencies ([www.articles.chicagotribune.com](http://www.articles.chicagotribune.com), November 7, 2012). The problems that pregnant women and new mothers face on the job are very real. Employers routinely ignore mandate in the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and are forcing pregnant women out of the workplace ([www.edition.cnn.com](http://www.edition.cnn.com), November 26, 2012). A Houston mother says she was fired from her job at a collection agency after asking to bring a breast pump into the office so she'd have plenty of fresh breast milk for her newborn. A new Connecticut mom says her new employer asked her to resign after she told them she was pregnant ([www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com), February 8, 2012).

The poverty rate among women is higher than males. The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) announced that the poverty rate for women in 2011 was 14.6 percent, compared to men's 10.9 percent. Women are more likely to live in poverty and about 40 percent of women who head families live in poverty, according to the NWLC. Another report on the plight of female retirees also notes that the poverty

rate among retired women is 50 percent higher than their male counterparts ([womensenews.org](http://womensenews.org), September 17, 2012).

Women are the victims of violence and sexual assaults. An average of three women in the U.S. lose their lives every day as a result of domestic violence ([www.dccadv.org](http://www.dccadv.org), October 1, 2012). A national census of domestic violence agencies in September 2011 found that more than 67,000 victims were served in a single day ([www.womensenews.org](http://www.womensenews.org), July 17, 2012). In 2010, the arrest rate for rape was 24 percent in the U.S. ([www.thedailybeast.com](http://www.thedailybeast.com), April 9, 2012). According to the Report on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, submitted by the Special Rapporteur to the General Assembly in 2012, most prison staff in the U.S. is not adequately trained to prevent or respond to inmate sexual assaults, and prison rape often goes unreported and untreated (United Nations document number A/67/227). Women in the U.S. forces are the victims of widespread sexual abuse, leading to media allegation that the US military has a culture of rape ([www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com), August 4, 2012). Around 79 percent of women serving in the military reported experiences of sexual harassment. Military sexual trauma often leads to debilitating conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and major depression ([www.servicewomen.org](http://www.servicewomen.org)). That Air Force drill instructor Luis Walker was accused of raping and sexually assaulting 10 female trainees is the biggest sex scandal to hit the U.S. military since the 1990s ([www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), July 21, 2012). In 2011, nearly 3,200 rapes and sexual assaults were officially reported, but the Pentagon admits that represents just 15 percent of all incidents. A military survey revealed that one in five women in the US forces has been sexually assaulted, but most do not report it. Nearly half said that they "did not want to cause trouble in their unit" ([www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com), August 4, 2012).

The health of female minority groups is worrying. A media report in June 2012 said rate of HIV infection in heterosexual African American women in the poorest neighborhoods of Washington, D.C. nearly doubled the 6.3 percent infection rate two years before. Officials said 90 percent of all women with HIV in the city are black ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), June 21, 2012). Sixty-six percent of the women newly infected with HIV each year are black, even though African-American women represent only 14 percent of the U.S. female population. The national age-adjusted death rate for black women in the U.S. is nearly 15 times higher than that observed for HIV-infected white women ([www.newswise.com](http://www.newswise.com), March 7, 2012). Minority women in the U.S. are more likely to die during or soon after childbirth than white

women, according to a report posted on the website of the Chicago Tribune on August 3, 2012. For every 100,000 babies born to white women, between seven and nine moms die from complications related to pregnancy. In comparison, 32 to 35 black women die for every 100,000 live babies. Deaths among Hispanic and Asian women - born in the U.S. and abroad - are closer to rates for white women at around 10 per 100,000.

Children in the U.S. are not blessed with enough protection for their personal safety and freedom. According to a report posted on the website of the Daily Telegraph on December 16, 2012, the slaughter of children by gunfire in the U.S. is 25 times the rate of the 20 next largest industrial countries in the world combined. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children says at least 100,000 children across the country are trafficked each year ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), September 27, 2012).

Child sexual abuse is a widespread public health problem. Research indicates that 20 percent of adult females and 5 to 15 percent adult males experienced sexual abuse in childhood or adolescence, according to a report posted on the website of [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org) on November 5, 2012. In 2010, 63,527 children in the U.S. were victims of child sexual abuse. According to a report by the CNN on October 18, 2012, 1,247 "ineligible volunteer files" of the Boy Scout released that year identified more than 1,000 leaders and volunteers banned from Boy Scout after being accused of sexual or inappropriate conduct with boys from 1965 to 1985. Priests and leaders of the Boy Scouts had shielded abusers, according to the report. Former Pennsylvania State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was convicted of abusing 10 children over 15 years ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), October 10, 2012). In 2012, several religious figures were found to have sexually assaulted children. In July 2012, Roman Catholic Monsignor William Lynn was sentenced to six years in prison for allowing a priest suspected of sexual misconduct with a minor to have continued contact with children (the Wall Street Journal, July 24, 2012). In September, a Roman Catholic bishop in Kansas City was found guilty of failing to tell authorities about child pornography that was produced by a priest under his supervision (the Wall Street Journal, September 6, 2012).

The number of homeless children increases sharply in the U.S. and many children are stricken by poverty. For the first time in history, public schools reported more than one million homeless children and youth, according to data released by the U.S. Department of Education on June 27, 2012. This total does not include homeless

children and youth who were not enrolled in public preschool programs and those identified by school officials. Forty-four states reported school year-to-year increases in the number of homeless students, with 15 states reporting increases of 20 percent or more. The number of homeless children enrolled in public schools has increased 57 percent since the 2006-2007 school year. In Michigan, the number of homeless children enrolled in public schools had increased 315 percent between 2008 and 2011 ([www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org), June 27, 2012). The number of children in New York city's shelters hit 19,000 by September 2012. Francheska Luciano, 14, said living in shelter was "like living in hell." ([www.nydailynews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com), September 9, 2012) The U.S. Department of Education said in a report that only 52 percent of identified homeless students who took standardized tests were proficient in reading, and only 51 percent passed the math portion. Homeless students were also found to be more likely to drop out of school and less likely to graduate from high school than their classmates ([www.neatoday.org](http://www.neatoday.org), Nov. 28, 2012). According to "America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2012," 22 percent of the children aged 0 to 17, or 16.4 million kids, live in poverty in 2010 ([www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com), July 17, 2012). Fourteen states saw increases in child poverty between 2010 and 2011 ([usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com), September 23, 2012). Nevada saw a 38 percent increase in child poverty over the past decade ([www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com), August 17, 2011).

## **VI. On U.S. Violations of Human Rights against Other Nations**

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has waged wars on other countries most frequently. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, both started by the U.S., have caused massive civilian casualties. From 2001 to 2011, the U.S.-led "war on terror" killed between 14,000 and 110,000 per year, said an article posted on the website of Stop the War Coalition on June 14, 2012 ([stopwar.org.uk](http://stopwar.org.uk), June 14, 2012). The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) tallied at least 10,292 non-combatants killed from 2007 to July 2011. The Iraq Body Count project records approximately 115,000 civilians killed in the cross-fire from 2003 to August 2011. According to the article, beyond the two states under occupation, the "War on Terror" has spilled into a number of neighboring countries including Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia, killing a great many civilians there. From 2004 to the time the article was written, a minimum of 484 civilians, including 168 children, were killed in strikes that occurred in Pakistan. It was also reported by the media that strikes resulted in 56 civilian deaths in Yemen, the article added. A news report, posted on BBC's website on September 25, 2012, pointed at recurrent U.S. drone attacks in the border regions of Afghanistan and

Pakistan ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), September 25, 2012). "Just one in 50 victims of America's deadly drone strikes in Pakistan are terrorists - while the rest are innocent civilians," said an article posted on September 25, 2012, on the website of the Daily Mail ([www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), September 25, 2012).

U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan also kill civilians for no reason. U.S. soldier Robert Bales was reported to walk out of a military base in the southern province of Kandahar at 3 o'clock on the night of March 11, 2012 and killed 17 civilians, including nine children. Bales split the slaughter into two episodes, returning to his base after the first attack and later slipping away to kill again. He first came to one family in a nearby village and shot a man dead, which scared others in the family to hide in neighborhood. Then he went to a second family and shot dead three people and injured six. Afterwards, he returned to his base and left for another village after chatting with one soldier at the base. In the village, he broke into a family and shot dead more than 10 people who were sound asleep. After the massacre, he collected some of the bodies and burned them. (The Agence France-Presse, March 23, 2012; The Associated Press, March 24, 2012; The Huffington Post, November, 11, 2012)

U.S.-led military operations have also brought forth ecological disasters. An article posted on the website of The Independent on October 14, 2012 cited a study that reported a "staggering rise" in birth defects among Iraqi children conceived in the aftermath of the war ([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), October 14, 2012). Steve Kretzmann, director of Oil Change International, said that the Iraq war was responsible for at least 141 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2e</sub>) from March 2003 through December 2007, according to a piece posted on December 21, 2009 on [coto2.wordpress.com](http://coto2.wordpress.com) ([coto2.wordpress.com](http://coto2.wordpress.com), December 21, 2009). "The war emits more than 60 percent of all countries," said Kretzmann. A study, cited by an article posted on the website of The Independent on October 14, 2012, linked a huge rise that Iraq had recorded since the war in birth defects with military actions in which American forces used metal contaminant-releasing white phosphorus shells. It found that in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, which saw two of the heaviest battles during the Iraq war, more than half of all babies surveyed were born with a birth defect between 2007 and 2010. Before the war, the figure was more like one in 10. More than 45 percent of all pregnancies surveyed ended in miscarriage in the two years after 2004, up from the previous 10 percent ([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), October 14, 2012).



U.S. soldiers have also severely insulted Afghan people's dignity and blasphemed against their religion. The AFP reported on September 24, 2012 that during a counter-insurgency operation in July 2011, four U.S. Marines urinated on three bloodied bodies of dead Taliban fighters, and one said, "Have a great day, buddy," to one of the dead. A videotape depicting their actions was recorded and later circulated on the Internet (The Agence France-Presse, September 24, 2012). In February 2012, U.S. troops at Bagram air base provoked public indignation by taking a batch of religious materials, including 500 copies of the Koran, to the incinerator, said a news story posted on the website of the Washington Post on August 27, 2012 ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), August 27, 2012).

The U.S. army has for long detained foreigners illegally at the Guantanamo prison. By January 2012, 171 people were still held there, said an article posted on the website of Watching America on January 17, 2012. They were denied the rights accorded to prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions, and savagely tortured ([www.watchingamerica](http://www.watchingamerica), January 17, 2012). American authorities have revealed that, in order to obtain confessions, some of the few being tried (only in military courts) have been tortured by waterboarding more than 100 times or intimidated with semiautomatic weapons, power drills or threats to sexually assault their mothers, said an article posted on the website of the New York Times on June 24, 2012 ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), June 24, 2012). Media reported that in September 2012, a 32-year-old Yemeni named Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif died at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, the ninth to have died there while in custody. He had been held at the detention camp since it was established in January 2002, without being charged with any crime ([abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com)). On January 23, 2012, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay spoke out against the failure by the U.S. to close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and to ensure accountability for serious violations - including torture - that took place there ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org), January 23, 2012). A noted American wrote in an article that the American government's counterterrorism policies "are now clearly violating at least 10 of the declaration's 30 articles, including the prohibition against 'cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'" ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), June 24, 2012).

The U.S. refuses to acknowledge "the right to development," which is a common concern among the majority of countries. In September 2012, the 21st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted a resolution on "the right to development." Except an abstention vote from the U.S., all the HRC members voted

for the resolution. The 67th session of the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted the 21st consecutive resolution, by a recorded vote of 188 in favor to three against with two abstentions, calling for an end to the U.S.' 50-plus years of economic blockade against Cuba. One of the three dissenting votes was from the U.S. (United Nations document number GA/11311)