

## Human Rights Record of the United States in 2016

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

March 2017

### Foreword

On March 3 local time, the State Department of the United States released its country reports on human rights practices, posing once again as "the judge of human rights". Wielding "the baton of human rights," it pointed fingers and cast blame on the human rights situation in many countries while paying no attention to its own terrible human rights problems. People cannot help asking about the actual human rights situation of the United States in 2016. Concrete facts show that the United States saw continued deterioration in some key aspects of its existent human rights issues last year. With the gunshots lingering in people's ears behind the Statue of Liberty, worsening racial discrimination and the election farce dominated by money politics, the self-proclaimed human rights defender has exposed its human rights "myth" with its own deeds.

-- The frequent occurrence of gun-related crimes led to heavy casualties and the incarceration rate remained high. There were a total of 58,125 gun violence incidents, including 385 mass shootings, in the United States in 2016, leaving 15,039 killed and 30,589 injured ([www.gunviolencearchive.org](http://www.gunviolencearchive.org), December 31, 2016). The United States had the second highest prisoner rate, with 693 prisoners per 100,000 of the national population ([www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com), April 2016). There had been 70 million Americans incarcerated - that's almost one in three adults - with some form of criminal record ([harvardlawreview.org](http://harvardlawreview.org), January 5, 2017).

-- Livelihood of middle- and low-income groups was worrisome amid widening income gap. In 2016, the proportion of adult Americans who had a full-time job hit a record low since 1983. Over the last three decades, nearly 70 percent of income ended up in the pockets of the wealthiest 10 percent. The population of U.S. middle-class registered a turning point toward contraction. Besides, one out of seven Americans remained in poverty, with life of 45 million people in strained circumstances. The average life expectancy fell from 78.9 years to 78.8 years as the United States posted a drop in overall life expectancy for the first time in over 20 years.

-- Racism continued to exist and racial relations worsened. In 2016, the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent reported to the United Nations Human Rights Council that racial problems were severe in the United States. The colonial history, enslavement, racial subordination and segregation, racial terrorism and racial inequality in the United States remained a serious challenge. Police killings were reminiscent of the past racial terror of lynching. The United States was undergoing a "human rights crisis" ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org), August 18, 2016).

-- There was no improvement to the protection of rights of women, children and elders, and the vulnerable groups' rights were seriously violated. Women were paid much less compared to their male colleagues. Women with city government jobs in New York made 18 percent less than men ([www.nydailynews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com), April 11, 2016). Women comprised about 60 percent of California workers earning minimum wage or less ([www.sandiegouniontribune.com](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com), April 10, 2016). Sexual harassments and assaults took place frequently. Roughly one in four women said they have been harassed on the job ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), July 7, 2016). A total of 20 percent of young women who attended college during a four-year span said they had been sexually assaulted ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), March 5, 2016). Poverty rate among children remained high and an estimated 6.8 million people aged 10 to 17 are food insecure ([www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org), September 11, 2016). Cases of elder abuse happened from time to time and about 5 million older adults were subject to abuse each year ([www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com), June 15, 2016).

-- The United States repeatedly trampled on human rights in other countries and willfully slaughtered innocent victims. From August 8, 2014 to December 19, 2016, the United States launched 7,258 air strikes in Iraq and 5,828 in Syria, causing 733 incidents with an estimated number of civilian deaths between 4,568 and 6,127 ([airwars.org](http://airwars.org), December 19, 2016). Since 2009, the upper limit of the civilian death toll from U.S. drones stood at more than 800 people in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), July 1, 2016) The issue of illegal detention and torturing prisoners of other countries remained unsolved.

-- The United States refused to approve core international conventions on human rights and did not accept UN draft resolutions related to human rights. It still has not ratified core international human rights conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the

Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. At the 71st General Assembly of the UN, the United States voted against draft resolutions related to human rights including "The right to development," "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures," "Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order," and "Declaration on the right to peace" ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org), December 19, 2016).

## **I. Serious Infringement on Right to Life, Personal Security**

In 2016, the U.S. government exercised no effective control over guns, law enforcement departments abused their power, and crimes were not effectively contained. As a result, civil rights, especially the right to life, were seriously threatened and people's personal rights were continuously infringed upon.

Occurrence of gun-related crimes sustained a high level. According to data released by the FBI on September 26, 2016, firearms were used in 71.5 percent of the nation's murders, 40.8 percent of robberies, and 24.2 percent of aggravated assaults in 2015 ([ucr.fbi.gov](http://ucr.fbi.gov), September 26, 2016). According to a toll report by the Gun Violence Archive, there were a total of 58,125 gun violence incidents, including 385 mass shootings, in the United States in 2016, leaving 15,039 killed and 30,589 injured ([www.gunviolencearchive.org](http://www.gunviolencearchive.org), December 31, 2016). On June 12, 2016, a gunman opened fire inside a crowded nightclub in Orlando, killing 50 people and injuring 53 others in a rampage that was the deadliest mass shooting in the country's history ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), June 12, 2016).

The crime rate shot up. According to the report "Crime in the United States" released by the FBI in 2016, there were an estimated 1,197,704 violent crimes committed around the nation in 2015, up 3.9 percent from the previous year. The estimated rate of violent crime was 372.6 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants, an increase of 3.1 percent compared with the 2014 rate. Among the 2015 violent crime total, 63.8 percent were aggravated assaults, 27.3 percent were robberies, 7.5 percent rapes and 1.3 percent murders. Nationwide, there were an estimated 7,993,631 property crimes, with the victims of such crimes suffering losses calculated at an estimated 14.3 billion U.S. dollars ([ucr.fbi.gov](http://ucr.fbi.gov)). In 2015, an estimated 15,696 cases of murder and non-negligent manslaughter occurred nationwide, according to data released by Statista ([www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com)). The United Kingdom's Daily Mail website reported on July 26, 2016 that homicides in 51 major U.S. cities in the first half of last year were up a startling 15 percent, and the homicide rate in Chicago was up 48 percent year on year ([www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), July

26, 2016). Josh Earnest, then the White House press secretary, pointed out that it was a problem that some cities "are experiencing a troubling surge in violent crime" ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), May 14, 2016). The U.S. president also admitted that "crime is out of control, and rapidly getting worse" ([www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), July 26, 2016). Hate crime cases also surged. According to Hate Crime Statistics, 2015 released by the FBI, law enforcement agencies submitted incident reports involving 5,850 criminal incidents and 6,885 related offenses as being motivated by bias toward race, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and gender identity in 2015 ([www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov), November 14, 2016).

Police abused their law enforcement power. According to the crime data released by the FBI, law enforcement made an estimated 10,797,088 arrests in 2015 nationwide. The estimated arrest rate for the United States in 2015 was 3,363 arrests per 100,000 inhabitants ([ucr.fbi.gov](http://ucr.fbi.gov)). Gun abuse was serious among the U.S. police during law enforcement. Media reviews identified 1,348 potential arrest-related deaths in the United States from June 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, an average of 135 deaths per month ([www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov), December 22, 2016). A total of 963 people were shot and killed by police in 2016 ([github.com/washingtonpost/data-police-shootings](https://github.com/washingtonpost/data-police-shootings)). According to a report by the Washington Post, as of July 8, 2016, of the 509 killed by U.S. police in that year at least 124 were thought to be suffering from mental illness ([www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com), July 8, 2016). Police officers who kill civilians rarely face criminal charges. About 1,000 civilians are killed by police each year, but only 77 officers have been charged with manslaughter or murder in connection with those deaths between 2005 and 2016 ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), October 19, 2016).

The incarceration rate remained high. According to data released by a U.S. market research firm in April 2016, the United States had the second highest prisoner rate, with 693 prisoners per 100,000 of the national population. Roughly 2.2 million people were incarcerated in the United States in 2014. ([www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com), April 2016) There had been 70 million Americans incarcerated -- that's almost one in three adults -- with some form of criminal record ([harvardlawreview.org](http://harvardlawreview.org), January 5, 2017). Only designed to hold about 13,000 people in total, the U.S. Alabama's prisons now housed 28,000 prisoners, more than doubling the designed capacity. The health of inmates cannot be safeguarded and infectious diseases including tuberculosis and dermatosis were easily transmitted from one to another. ([apr.org](http://apr.org), December 16, 2016) The website of Washington Post reported on November 28, 2016 that two policemen were imprisoned for beating a mentally-ill inmate and forging records to cover up their prisoner abuse ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), November 28, 2016). According to a report of the Washington Post website on December 19, 2016, guards at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department had beaten and abused inmates. Its

former head thwarted a federal investigation into the beatings and other abuses at the Los Angeles County jail system he ran. The probe led to convictions of 20 members of the Sheriff's department ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 19, 2016). The Washington Post reported on its website on December 2, 2016 that a guard at New York City's jail complex Rikers Island "savagely" kicked an ailing inmate to death ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 2, 2016). In-prison deaths continued to increase. According to data released by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in December 2016, between 2001 and 2014, there were 50,785 inmate deaths in the United States. In 2014, there were 3,927 inmate deaths in state and federal prisons. This is the largest number of inmate deaths reported since the Deaths in Custody Reporting Program (DCRP) began collecting data in 2001. Suicide was the leading cause of death in local jails. There were 372 suicides in 2014, up 13 percent from 2013. The number of suicides in state prisons increased by 30 percent from 2013 to 2014 ([www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov), December 2016).

## **II. Political Rights Undermined**

In 2016, money politics and power-for-money deals had controlled the presidential election, which was full of lies and farces. There were no guarantees of political rights, while the public responded with waves of boycott and protests, giving full exposure of the hypocritical nature of U.S. democracy.

Voter turnout and support rate reached new low. Only about 55 percent of voting age citizens cast ballots in the 2016 election, lowest in 20 years ([edition.cnn.com](http://edition.cnn.com), November 30, 2016). A growing number of Americans were disappointed or even angry about the election. Pew research conducted prior to the election showed that many of the voters who planned on coming to the polls were angry. Those who didn't vote this time went beyond alienation to antipathy -- a complete aversion and dislike for things political ([www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com), December 6, 2016).

Most Expensive Election Ever. Americans who are running for federal elective offices spent more than ever -- about 6.8 billion U.S. dollars. That's more than what consumers spend on cereal (6 billion U.S. dollars). Candidates seeking House and Senate and the independent groups supporting them are expected to shell out 410 million U.S. dollars more than during the 2012 presidential election ([www.cbsnews.com](http://www.cbsnews.com), November 8, 2016). According to the website of the Washington Post, Clinton's campaign had raised 1.4 billion U.S. dollars by the end of November 2016, while Trump's had raised 932 million U.S. dollars ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 9, 2016). CNN reported that 2016 was "the year when money won nobody nothing," and "a golden age to be a man of means"

(us.cnn.com, November 12, 2016). Money politics had triggered nationwide protests, in which many were arrested by the police.

Media failed to be objective and impartial. U.S. media published a lot of biased reports and commentaries during the 2016 election, fully demonstrating their failure in staying objective or impartial. The media clearly chose their side in covering the election. Among the top 100 newspapers based on daily circulation, 57 endorsed the Democratic nominee while 2 the Republican, according to data revealed by the media endorsements count conducted by University of California, Santa Barbara. A poll made by Quinnipiac University on October 19, 2016 also found that the news media was biased in its coverage of the presidential election, a feeling shared by 55 percent of American likely voters, including about 90 percent of Republicans and 61 percent of independent voters (poll.qu.edu, October 19, 2016).

### III. Grim Living Conditions of Low- and Middle-income Americans

In 2016, the U.S. social polarization became more serious, with the proportion of adults who had full-time jobs hitting a new low since 1983 (www.gallup.com, September 20, 2016), income gaps continuing to widen, the size of middle class reaching a turning point and beginning to shrink (bigstory.ap.org, May 12, 2016), and living conditions of the lower class deteriorating.

Income gaps continued to widen. On May 17, 2016, the website of The Guardian reported that the U.S. top 500 chief executive officers (CEOs) earned 340 times the average worker's wage in 2015. Adjusted for inflation, wages of ordinary workers remained stagnant for 50 years. (www.theguardian.com, May 17, 2016) The businessinsider.com revealed that while CEOs of the 350 largest U.S. companies grew by about 940 percent from 1978 to 2015 after adjusting for inflation, the typical worker's pay grew just 10 percent over that time (www.businessinsider.com, August 15, 2016). The website of the Wall Street Journal reported that over the past 30 years, nearly 70 percent of incomes went to the 10 percent richest Americans, which was called the most astonishing "economic achievement" in recent years by The Time sarcastically (www.newser.com, December 8, 2016).

The middle class shrank. The Wall Street Journal reported that 92 percent of people born in 1940 earned more at 30 years old than their parents did when they were the same age. However, for people born in 1980, that percentage dropped to 51. (www.newser.com, December 8, 2016) According to consulting firm Gallup, the percentage of Americans who said they were in the middle or upper-middle class

had fallen by 10 percentage points, from an average of 61 percent between 2000 and 2008 to 51 percent in 2016. That drop meant 25 million people in the United States fared much worse in economic terms. ([www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com), September 20, 2016) According to a Pew Research Center report released on May 11, 2016, the American middle class was no longer the majority at nearly 25 percent of large cities ([bigstory.ap.org](http://bigstory.ap.org), May 12, 2016). From 2000 to 2014, the share of adults living in middle-class households fell by 4 percentage points nationally, and declined by 6 percentage points or more in 53 metropolitan areas ([www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org), May 11, 2016). A Pew survey showed 62 percent of 1,500 surveyed adults said the government had not cared enough about the middle class ([www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org), February 4, 2016).

Low-income and poverty population lives deteriorated. One in seven Americans, or at least 45 million people, lived in poverty ([www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), September 10, 2016). A Pew survey showed 49 percent of Americans said they could not make ends meet; 42 percent said they managed to strike a balance between incomes and expenditures ([www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org), February 4, 2016). By the end of 2015, homeless people stood at about 500,000 ([www.theatlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com), February 11, 2016). The number of homeless people surged in large cities. There were more than 60,000 homeless people in Wisconsin ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), October 16, 2016). Thousands of low-income people in industries including fast food, home care and airport went on strike repeatedly for the minimum wage standard of 15-U.S.-dollar per hour ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), November 21, 2016).

Life expectancy dropped. Life expectancy in the United States in 2015 declined for the first time in more than two decades, according to data released by the National Center for Health Statistics on December 8, 2016. Life expectancy for men fell from 76.5 years in 2014 to 76.3 in 2015, while that for women decreased from 81.3 to 81.2. Overall life expectancy dropped from 78.9 to 78.8 years ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), December 8, 2016). At the same time, suicide rate in the United States rose. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that there were 41,149 suicides in the United States in 2013, up by about 41 percent from 1999. Suicide was the tenth leading cause of all deaths in the United States in 2013, claiming twice as many lives than homicide ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov), December 2016). In 2015, the suicide rate in the United States surged to its highest level in almost three decades ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), April 22, 2016).

Health conditions declined. For U.S. residents, self-reported health status had fallen among each age group between 25 and 59 since 1990, according to a report from Gallup. The share of the working-age population suffering from a disability that prevented them from working rose from 4.4 percent in 1980 to 6.8 percent in 2015, adjusting for age. That situation was related to the exorbitant costs and weak

efficiency of the U.S. health system ([www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com), December 15, 2016). The convoluted and opaque system of paying for prescription drugs enabled executives of drug companies to set extraordinary prices on modest medicines that had been around for years, and some companies even used free coupons for patients to raise drug prices by 10 times, the Chicago Tribune reported on December 6 ([www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com), December 6, 2016).

Social security system was seriously flawed. The Des Moines Register reported that there were 1,136,849 applicants of federal disability benefits on the waiting list, which meant they could wait up to 26 months to get an administrative-law hearing on their claim for benefits ([www.desmoinesregister.com](http://www.desmoinesregister.com), December 25, 2016). Statistics released by the [singlemotherguide.com](http://singlemotherguide.com) showed only 22.4 percent of the single mothers who had been laid off or looking for work received unemployment benefits in the United States ([singlemotherguide.com](http://singlemotherguide.com), September 17, 2016). CNN reported that 16 state prison systems in the United States had no formal procedure to enroll prisoners in Medicaid as they reentered the community. The story said nine states had only small programs in select facilities or for limited groups of prisoners. It went on to say that these 25 states collectively release some 375,000 inmates each year. The CNN report also said two-thirds of the 9,000 chronically ill prisoners released each year by Philadelphia's jails were not getting enrolled as they left ([edition.cnn.com](http://edition.cnn.com), December 12, 2016).

#### **IV. Racial Discrimination Worsened**

In 2016, racial relations in the United States continued to deteriorate. There were repeated incidents of African Americans being shot by white police. Racial discrimination heavily influenced law enforcement and justice fields. There were systematic gaps between minority races and white people in employment and income. Minority people endured various discriminative treatments in schools and social lives. The USA Today website reported on July 14, 2016 that a poll found 52 percent of Americans believed racism against black people was an "extremely" or "very" serious problem. According to a New York Times-CBS News survey, 69 percent of poll respondents said race relations in the United States were generally bad. Six in ten Americans said race relations were growing worse, up from 38 percent a year ago ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), July 14, 2016).

Incidents of police killing African-Americans happened repeatedly. According to the Mapping Police Violence website, American police killed at least 303 African-Americans in 2016 ([mappingpoliceviolence.org](http://mappingpoliceviolence.org), December 2016). On July 5, 2016, Alton Sterling, a 37-year-old African-American man, entered into clashes with others outside a convenience store in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After police arrived, they held him to the ground, straddled over his body and killed him with multiple gunshots ([edition.cnn.com](http://edition.cnn.com), July 8, 2016). On July 6, 2016, police in Minnesota stopped a car



with mal-functioning rear light and shot an African-American man Philando Castile when he was getting his license and registration. Castile's mother said her son was "black in the wrong place" and said there was "a silent war against African-American people." The U.S. government admitted that the two fatal shootings were not isolated incidents, but symptomatic of the broader challenges within the U.S. criminal justice system ([www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com), July 7, 2016). Two consecutive police killings of African Americans triggered violent protests nationwide. On July 7, 2016, during the protests in Dallas, Texas, five police officers were shot and killed and nine more were injured by an African-American veteran, who said he wanted to kill white police officers to protest against police brutality ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), July 14, 2016). A Washington Post website report on police shootings in 2015 found that black Americans were 2.5 times as likely to be shot and killed by police as white Americans. Unarmed black men were five times as likely to be shot and killed by police as unarmed white men ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 6, 2016). On February 17, 2016, Paul Gaston, a 37-year-old Cincinnati man, had just been in a serious car accident before he was shot and killed by three police officers. Police claimed Gaston appeared to reach for a gun in his waistband, but it turned out to be a fake one. A day before, a white man pointed a similar fake gun at the police in Cincinnati, but the police did not fire a shot, only peacefully arrested the man and charged him with menacing. The New York Daily News website commented that the two incidents and their differing outcomes highlighted the different police attitudes towards black and white men and the racial double standards in America were real ([www.nydailynews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com), February 19, 2016). The Washington Post website reported on December 6, 2016, that Edgar Maddison Welch, 28 years old, entered a restaurant in northwest Washington while carrying a semiautomatic rifle. Welch walked backward out of the restaurant unarmed and with his hands up, and the police did not shoot him ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 6, 2016). In sharp contrast, on September 16, 2016, Terence Crutcher was shot and killed by police in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Crutcher had his hands up and back turned. Police officer also deployed Taser gun on him ([www.cbsnews.com](http://www.cbsnews.com), September 19, 2016).

Racial discrimination in law enforcement and judicial fields was common. The New York Times website reported on August 10, 2016, that Baltimore relied on 'zero tolerance' street enforcement, which encouraged officers to make large numbers of stops, searches and arrests for minor, highly discretionary offenses. These practices led to repeated violations of the constitutional and statutory rights. Data from police departments around the country showed that officers using the zero-tolerance strategy focused their arrests on African-American men in poor neighborhoods, while ignoring the same offenses in wealthier white neighborhoods

([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), August 10, 2016). A poll by the U.S. Public Religion Research Institute showed that 64 percent of the African Americans said police mistreatment was a major problem in their community. More than 81 percent black Americans said police killings of African American men were part of a broader pattern of how police treat African Americans ([www.prrri.org](http://www.prrri.org), August 7, 2016). The Washington Post website reported on August 31, 2016 that five years ago, police in South Bend, Indiana, mistook 18-year-old high school senior DeShawn Franklin as a suspect and went inside his home without a search warrant. They punched him several times and used a stun gun on him. In August 2016, the jury found the officers violated Franklin's constitutional rights, ordered each of the defendants to pay Franklin and his parents one dollar for the violation of their rights. The total award was 18 dollars in damages. Mario Sims, a senior pastor in South Bend, said the small amount of compensation sent a strong message to Franklin and his family: "your rights are worth a dollar" ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), August 31, 2016).

Gap between minority and white people was widened in employment and income. According to the American Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment rate for African-Americans in December 2016 was close to two times the figure for white Americans. Unemployment rate for Latin Americans was 35 percent higher than white Americans ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov), January 6, 2017). The New York Daily News website reported on September 21, 2016 that the wage gap between blacks and whites was the worst in nearly four decades. In 2015, the hourly pay gap between blacks and whites widened to 26.7 percent, with whites making an average of 25.22 U.S. dollars an hour compared to 18.49 dollars for blacks ([www.nydailynews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com), September 21, 2016). Almost 40 years ago in 1979, the hourly wage gap between black and white men was 22 percent, but the figure rose to 31 percent in 2015. The hourly wage gap between black and white women grew from six percent to 19 percent ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), September 20, 2016). The American National Women's Law Center reported that Latina women earned as little as 54 cents for every dollar white men made. Black and Latino women would lose more than 877,000 U.S. dollars and one million dollars respectively over a 40-year career compared to their white male counterparts ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), August 16, 2016).

Disciplinary punishments are clearly differentiated among racial groups in public schools. Civil rights data from the U.S. Department of Education from 2013 to 2014 show that among the 2.8 million students suspended from school, 1.1 million are African-Americans. The likeliness of suspension for African-American students is 3.8 times that for white students ([www.ibtimes.com](http://www.ibtimes.com), August 25, 2016). The USA Today website reported on October 5, 2016, that the Indian River School District of Delaware had set up George Washington Carver Academy in Frankford as a

segregated special-education school for discipline-violating students. At the Indian River School District, white students who bring cell phones to school usually see their phones confiscated for one day, but an African-American student seen with a phone in the backpack is directly referred to Carver. African-American students were sent to Carver in disproportionate numbers on various pretexts and they were segregated at Carver on arbitrary ground and for arbitrary periods of time while their educational needs were neglected. A coalition of parents filed a lawsuit to the federal court, contending that the school had become a "dumping ground" for African-American students ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), October 5, 2016).

Muslims suffer increasingly serious discrimination. The Washington Post website reported on December 9, 2016, that 82 percent of Americans believe Muslims in the United States face discrimination and a majority of 57 percent say Muslims face "a lot" of discrimination, which is seven percentage points higher than in the last poll three years ago. Surveys by Pew Research Center show that Muslims have, for years, ranked as the group that faces the most discrimination in the United States ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), December 9, 2016).

Racial discrimination is strongly condemned by the United Nations. After conducting investigations across the United States from January 9 to 29 of 2016, the UN Human Rights Council's Expert Group on People of African Descent expressed serious concerns about the police killings, the presence of police in schools, violence targeting the African American community with impunity, racial bias in the criminal justice system, and mass incarceration and the criminalization of poverty which disproportionately affects African Americans. Ms. Mireille France, who currently heads the UN Expert Group, stressed, "The persistent gap in almost all the human development indicators, such as life expectancy, income and wealth, level of education, housing, employment and labor, and even food security, among African Americans and the rest of the U.S. population, reflects the level of structural discrimination that creates de facto barriers for people of African descent to fully exercise their human rights ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org), January 29, 2016). The Expert Group's investigative report pointed out, the U.S. government failed to fulfill its obligations of protecting the rights of Americans of African descent and that systematic and structural racism continues to negatively impact the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of African Americans today. The report particularly criticized police killings and racial bias in the criminal justice system. A large amount of cases prove that violence and overuse of lethal forces exist in law enforcement processes and these behaviors are mostly exempted from criminal punishment. "Police killings and the trauma it creates are reminiscent of the 'racial terror and lynching' of the

past. Impunity for state violence has resulted in the current human rights crisis and must be addressed as a matter of urgency." According to the report, police killings of unarmed Americans of African Descent are only one tip of the iceberg of the widespread racial discrimination in the justice system. The incarceration rate for African American males is 5.9 times higher than the rate for white males, while the rate for African American females is 2.1 times higher than the rate for white females. African Americans only constitute 14 percent of the U.S. population, but they account for 36 percent of federal and state prisoners. African Americans are regarded as dangerous criminal groups since childhood and face presumption of guilt. African Americans are more likely to face serious criminal punishments than white Americans, particularly on capital punishment. The report pointed out that African Americans are also in seriously unequal situations on education, medical care, housing, and employment. Twenty-six percent (more than 10 million) of African Americans remain mired in poverty and 12 percent live in what is known as "deep poverty." In 2015, of the more than half a million homeless people in the United States, African Americans constituted 40.4 percent ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org), August 18, 2016).

#### **V. Women, Children, Elders' Rights Lack Proper Protection**

The situation of protection of rights of women, children and elders in the United States was worrisome in 2016. Women were paid much less compared to their male colleagues who do the same work, and they frequently fell victims to sexual harassment and assault. Poverty rate among children remained high and cases of elder abuse happened from time to time.

Gender pay gaps remained large. Women were paid much less compared to their male colleagues who do the same work in 2016 ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), March 8, 2016). An analysis found women with city government jobs in New York made 18 percent less than men (<http://www.nydailynews.com>, April 11, 2016). Gender pay gap among supervisor staff in San Diego was even wider. Women who work for San Diego County supervisors earned about 37,000 U.S. dollars less in pre-tax pay per year on average ([www.sandiegouniontribune.com](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com), August 14, 2016). Women comprised about 60 percent of California workers earning minimum wage or less, according to a review of federal labor statistics by the National Women's Law Center ([www.sandiegouniontribune.com](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com), April 10, 2016).

Sexual harassments and assaults took place frequently. The USA Today website reported on July 7, 2016 that roughly one in four women say they have been harassed on the job ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), July 7, 2016). It said that with many

victims too frightened to speak up, attorneys and employment experts said the actual number of such instances was likely far higher. The New York Post website on July 14, 2016 reported that an investigation found Tennessee lawmaker Jeremy Durham used his position to sexually harass at least 22 female interns, lobbyists, staff and political workers (nypost.com, July 14, 2016). In the law enforcement field, the U.S. police failed to provide adequate protection for sexual assault victims and are deeply dismissive of such people. The New York Times website on October 28 reported that Baltimore officers sometimes humiliated women who tried to report sexual assault and disregarded some complaints filed by certain victims. Some officers blamed victims or discouraged them from identifying their assailants. There were even complaints that some officers target members of a vulnerable population -- people involved in the sex trade -- to coerce sexual favors from them in exchange for avoiding arrest, or for cash or narcotics (www.nytimes.com, October 28, 2016). A Los Angeles Times report on October 28 said that nearly half of skid row women had been attacked in the previous 12 months; more than a quarter of them were sexually assaulted (www.latimes.com, October 28, 2016). As of February 26, 2016, federal investigations related to sexual violence were underway at 167 colleges and universities, according to the Education Department. A Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll in 2015 found that 20 percent of young women who attended college during a four-year span said they had been sexually assaulted (www.washingtonpost.com, March 5, 2016). A survey of Santa Cruz graduate students found that 32.6 percent of 200 respondents said they had been sexually harassed or knew someone who had been (www.latimes.com, March 2, 2016). Sexual violence also happened in primary and secondary schools. The Education Department in fiscal 2015 received 65 civil rights complaints related to K-12 school districts' handling of sexual violence - triple the number the agency had received the year before (www.washingtonpost.com, January 17, 2016). The Miami Herald website on September 21 reported that after a 16-year-old girl told her high school she was sexually assaulted, her school failed to respond properly and she was further traumatized during the investigation. She was eventually suspended (www.miamiherald.com, September 21, 2016).

Protection for children's rights was inadequate. The U.S. Urban Institute on September 11, 2016 released a report noting that an estimated 6.8 million people aged 10 to 17 are food insecure. When faced with acute food insecurity, some youths engaged in criminal behavior such as selling drugs and stealing items to resell for cash. Some youths sold sex for money to pay for food. In a few communities,

teens talked about going to jail or failing school (so they could attend summer classes and get school lunch) as viable strategies for ensuring regular meals ([www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org), September 11, 2016). A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center found that about 59 percent of people said the government does not do enough for poor people or for children ([www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org), February 4, 2016). An Associated Press website report on October 14 said that during the first six months of 2016, minors died from accidental shootings at a pace of one every other day ([bigstory.ap.org](http://bigstory.ap.org), October 14, 2016). USA Today website reported on October 5 that a new research suggested that more than 160,000 children in 19 states are the victims of corporal punishment in schools each year ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), October 5, 2016). In mid-September, more than 14,000 kids in Texas had not been seen by child abuse investigators within state-mandated timeframe after a report of abuse. Some children died in child abuse cases were already on the Child Protective Services radar ([www.mystatesman.com](http://www.mystatesman.com), October 4, 2016).

Elders lived in difficulties. A report at the Christian Science Monitor website on June 15 said that according to estimates of the U.S. National Center on Elder Abuse, of the 5 million older adults abused each year, 90 percent are abused by family members, and half are the person's children. Abuse can be verbal, financial, physical, or sexual ([www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com), June, 15, 2016). The situation for elderly women was even worrisome. The National Institute on Retirement Security reported that women are 80 percent more likely than men to be impoverished at age 65 and older. Women at age 75 to 79 are three times more likely ([www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com), July 10, 2016).

## **VI. Gross Violations of Human Rights in Other Countries**

In 2016, the United States continued to trample on human rights in other countries, causing tremendous civilian casualties. Its overseas monitoring projects infringed on the privacy of citizens of other countries and the United States set up detention camp that illegally detained and tortured prisoners in many places on the globe.

Air strikes caused a large number of civilian casualties. According to Airwars, a project aimed at tracking air strikes in the Middle East, the United States had repeatedly organized coalition forces to launch air strikes against military forces in Iraq and Syria since August 8, 2014. As of December 19, 2016, the United States launched 7,258 air strikes in Iraq and 5,828 in Syria, causing 733 incidents with an estimated number of civilian deaths between 4,568 and 6,127 ([www.airwars.org](http://www.airwars.org), December 19, 2016). According to a report by the website of Los Angeles Times on

December 2, a U.S. airstrike killed at least 15 civilians in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province ([www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com), December 2, 2016). Since 2009, the upper limit of the civilian death toll from U.S. drones stood at more than 800 people in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), July 1, 2016).

The issue of illegal detention and torturing prisoners of other countries remained unsolved. The U.S. government promised to close Guantanamo Bay detention camp in 2009, but as of December 4, 2016, there were 59 detainees at Guantanamo Bay ([www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com), December 4, 2016). According to a report by the Washington Post on June 14, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit against the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on violating "Freedom of Information" and forced the CIA to release 50 declassified documents. A declassified report revealed in a CIA prison in Afghanistan known as the Salt Pit, militant Gul Rahman was placed in an "extremely cold" cell, suffered from pouring water to his body, and was determined to have died of hypothermia while in detention ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), June 16, 2016). In a document titled "Description of Physical Pressures," the CIA tortured detainees including a facial slap, use of diapers, "insects," and "mock burial." In November 2016, the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor said in a report that the U.S. armed forces and the CIA may have committed war crimes by torturing detainees in Afghanistan ([www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com), November 15, 2016).

The United States continued overseas monitoring projects in a large scale. The U.S. intelligence agencies placed long-term monitoring of head and leaders of other states, diplomatic institutions and common people. Since National Security Agency (NSA) contractor Edward Snowden leaked the U.S. surveillance programs to the new media in June 2013, the United States continuously extended the scale to monitor head and leaders of other states, common people and related enterprises with updated technologies which draw sharp criticism. In 2016, the CIA invested in firms to mine Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other social media ([theintercept.com](http://theintercept.com), April 15, 2016). A windowless Manhattan skyscraper appeared to be a secrete location used for NSA surveillance program that targeted not only domestic communication but also the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and at least 38 countries ([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), November 17, 2016). A spy base named Titanpointe in NSA building used equipment with companies such as AT&T and spied on phone calls, fax messages and internet data, intercepting satellite data including emails, chats, Skype calls, passwords, and internet browsing histories. The United States drew vast criticism from the international community.