SPECIAL PROCEDURES
UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Ben Saul

Trends in Communications to States and Other Actors: 2005 to 2025

From 2005 to 2025 the Special Rapporteur led or joined a total of 1,163 communications to States and other actors, including allegation letters (AL) raising concerns in individual cases, urgent appeals (UA), and other letters (OL) addressing legislation and policy.[1] Communications since 2010, and State replies received, can be found on the Special Procedures communication database, applying the mandate filter for "terrorism".[2]

The numbers below do not include additional communications addressing terrorism or counter-terrorism led by other mandate holders that the mandate did not or was unable to join. Due to lack of resources, the mandate is not able to address all of the many allegations and information that could form the basis of other potential communications. Other concerns may, however, be raised through country visit reports and thematic reports.

Number of communications over time

The volume of communications led or joined has increased significantly over time. About one-third (34% percent) of the mandate's 1,163 communications were sent in the three recent years from 2023 to 2025. There has also been a steady increase in the number of communications led (drafted) by the mandate, for instance representing 69 of the 151 communications in 2025. Reflecting the prevalence of human rights violations while countering terrorism, the 151 communications joined by the mandate in 2025 represents almost one-fifth (19 percent) of all communications sent in that year by all 59 Special Procedures mandates. The following table lists the number of communications by year:

2005-2010	125
2011	80
2012	22
2013	22
2014	18
2015	28
2016	15
2017	15

2018	69
2019	47
2020	96
2021	142
2022	85
2023	137
2024	111
2025	151

[1] Information about the communications procedure is here: https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-environment/communications-special-procedures.
[2] https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/Tmsearch/TMDocuments.

Number of communications by State

A relatively small number of States accounts for the majority of communications. In particular, 29 States have received 10 or more communications. Of these:

- 1 State received between 40 and 49 communications;
- 4 States received between 30 and 39;
- 9 States received between 20 and 29;
- 12 states received between 10 and 19; and
- 3 States received more than 64.

Of the remaining States:

- 25 States received between 5 and 9 communications;
- 82 States received between 1 and 4 communications; and
- 58 States received zero communications.

The numbers of communications by State, and the percentage of communications to which each State substantively replied, are listed on the next page. In addition, 90 communications were sent to "other actors", which can include de facto authorities, international and regional organizations, businesses, and non-state armed groups.

Explanatory remarks

The number of communications received can highlight States of particular concern. It does not, however, imply an objective ranking of the "worst" human rights violators for various reasons:

- The communications procedure is substantially reactive to allegations received. Civil society is more active on some States than others; information can be scarce on certain States who repress civil society; the risk of reprisals may preclude communications; and victims can lack the awareness, literacy, resources, language skills or digital connectivity to send allegations and access the United Nations.
- Communications present allegations, with a legal analysis should the allegations be true, but are not conclusive findings of violations. The number of communications also does not reflect if a State remedied the violations or changed behaviour.
- The human rights addressed in communications varies widely. One State may have received a few communications addressing grave violations of the right to life, while another may have received many communications on due process or free speech.
- The number of victims in communications varies widely. Some communications address a single victim, while others address hundreds, thousands or millions of victims (as in cases of aggression, international crimes, armed conflict, or laws affecting whole populations). Where OLs address bills not yet adopted, there are not yet any victims.

Where a State has received a large number of communications over time, this often reflects concerns about ongoing systemic patterns of violations in similar cases, including where counter-terrorism measures are targeted against large political opposition movements or civil society actors. Large numbers can also reflect that a State is a legislative innovator or "norm entrepreneur" in creating new but problematic types of counter-terrorism laws; that it is engaged in armed conflict or occupation; or that it has a global counter-terrorism footprint.

Number of communications by State

State	Number	Reply %*
United States of America	**74**	35
Egypt	**65**	35
Türkiye	**64**	86
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	**42**	86
Pakistan	**36**	22
Saudi Arabia	**32**	81
Israel	**33**	3
Russian Federation	**31**	94
People's Democratic Republic of China	**28**	79
India	**25**	52
Iraq	**25**	68
Belarus	**24**	50
Bahrain	**23**	91
United Arab Emirates	**23**	30
France	**22**	59
Sri Lanka	**21**	29
Philippines	**20**	55
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	**19**	74
Algeria	**18**	83
Tunisia	**16**	44
Australia	**14**	79
Nicaragua	**14**	7
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	**13**	23
Morocco	**11**	82
Syrian Arab Republic	**11**	45
Thailand	**11**	36
Ethiopia	**10**	30
Germany	**10**	90
Lebanon	**10**	40
Canada	**9**	78
Kazakhstan	**9**	29
Nigeria	**9**	11
Yemen	**9**	11
Kenya	**8**	0
Spain	**8**	88
Sudan	**8**	0
Sweden	**8**	75
Afghanistan	**7**	0
Chile	**7**	86
El Salvador	**7**	86
Indonesia	**7**	43
Kyrgyzstan	**7**	29
Somalia	**7**	14
Switzerland	**7**	86
Uzbekistan	**7**	43
Peru	**6**	33
Serbia	**6**	50
Tajikistan	**6**	33
Austria	**5**	100
Bangladesh	**5**	20
Cameroon	**5**	60
Italy	**5**	60
Jordan	**5**	60
Viet Nam	**5**	60
Albania	**4**	25
Belgium	**4**	100
Bosnia and Herzegovina	**4**	0
Denmark	**4**	75
Libya	**4**	0
Mali	**4**	25
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	**4**	75
South Africa	**4**	50
Ukraine	**4**	100
Brazil	**3**	100
Burkina Faso	**3**	67
Cambodia	**3**	33
Ecuador	**3**	33
Georgia	**3**	67
Guatemala	**3**	67
Kosovo	**3**	0
Malaysia	**3**	33
Maldives	**3**	67

* These include substantive replies only, not also those merely acknowledging receipt of a communication.

Mauritania	**3**	33
Trinidad & Tobago	**3**	67
Uganda	**3**	33
United Republic of Tanzania	**3**	67
Zimbabwe	**3**	33
Azerbaijan	**2**	50
Bolivia (Pluri-national State of)	**2**	100
Colombia	**2**	100
Côte d'Ivoire	**2**	0
Cyprus	**2**	100
Eswatini	**2**	50
Gabon	**2**	0
Honduras	**2**	0
Hungary	**2**	50
Ireland	**2**	100
New Zealand	**2**	100
Niger	**2**	50
North Macedonia	**2**	0
Norway	**2**	100
Poland	**2**	50
Portugal	**2**	100
Romania	**2**	50
Slovakia	**2**	100
State of Palestine	**2**	0
Angola	**1**	0
Argentina	**1**	100
Armenia	**1**	100
Benin	**1**	0
Bhutan	**1**	100
Brunei Darussalam	**1**	0
Chad	**1**	0
Comoros	**1**	0
Congo	**1**	0
Czech Republic	**1**	100
Democratic Rep. of the Congo	**1**	0
Djibouti	**1**	0
Equatorial Guinea	**1**	0
Eritrea	**1**	0
Estonia	**1**	100
Fiji	**1**	0
Finland	**1**	100
Gambia (Republic of The)	**1**	0
Haiti	**1**	0
Kuwait	**1**	0
Lao PDR	**1**	0
Lithuania	**1**	0
Madagascar	**1**	100
Malawi	**1**	0
Malta	**1**	100
Mauritius	**1**	0
Mexico	**1**	0
Mozambique	**1**	0
Myanmar	**1**	100
Nepal	**1**	0
Panama	**1**	100
Paraguay	**1**	0
Qatar	**1**	100
Republic of Korea	**1**	100
Rwanda	**1**	0
Senegal	**1**	0
Singapore	**1**	100
South Sudan	**1**	0
Togo	**1**	100
Turkmenistan	**1**	0
Other actors	**90**	24
Total	**1,163**	**51**

States with no communications 2005-2025

Andorra
Antigua and Barbuda
Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Botswana
Bulgaria
Burundi
Cabo Verde
Central African Rep.
Costa Rica
Croatia
Cuba
Dominica
Dominican Rep.
Ghana
Greece
Grenada
Guinea
Guinea Bissau
Guyana
Iceland
Jamaica
Japan
Kiribati
Latvia
Lesotho
Liberia
Liechtenstein
Luxembourg
Marshall Islands
Micronesia (Federated States of)
Monaco
Mongolia
Montenegro
Namibia
Nauru
Oman
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Republic of Moldova
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Samoa
San Marino
São Tome and Principe
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Slovenia
Solomon Islands
Suriname
Timor-Leste
Tonga
Tuvalu
Uruguay
Vanuatu
Zambia

Website of the Special Rapporteur:
https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-terrorism